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OUR COUNTRY:

ITS PERIL AND ITS DELIVERANCE.

FROM
ADVANCE SHEETS
OF THE
DANVILLE QUARTERLY REVIEW, FOR MARCH, 1861.

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ART. IV. — *Our Country — Its Peril — Its Deliverance.*

- I. THE SPIRIT OF ANARCHY: Its Rise — Progress — Present State — Nature — Tendency.
- II. GROUNDS OF HOPE AND EFFORT: Statement of the Facts, Principles, and Considerations, on which the Preservation of the Union depends.
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- V. THE DOCTRINE OF COERCION: Its Abuse — Nature — Relation to the actual State of Affairs — The Power, Duty, and Responsibility of the General Government.

I. 1. What we propose is, *first*, to make such a statement of the condition of affairs as may be of use to upright men, in enabling them to determine what ought to be attempted, and what can be accomplished, in the way of preventing the ruin of their country; and, *secondly*, to make clear to all men, the position of a vast party in this country, who desire and who deserve, in all possible events, to be understood by posterity — and who, even if their principles are now overborne and their counsels are now rejected, may, if they are faithful to themselves, retrieve from the wreck of their country, whatever survives when the period of exhaustion shall come upon its destructive madness.

2. There is no lesson which the universal course of human affairs teaches so thoroughly, as their own instability. And yet there is no lesson so hard for men to learn; no lesson so pregnant of results, and so little heeded. How faithful ought men to be when overtaken by defeat and adversity — if they would consider that defeat and adversity, with courage and wisdom, are a preparation for triumph? How just and forbearing ought men to be in the midst of power and prosperity, if they would consider

that power and prosperity, in the degree that they are corrupt, make the road to destruction broad and sure? And how immense, how unexpected, how effectual are the resources of God, in the accomplishment of what he ordains to be results of human conduct?

3. Look at the actual position of public affairs throughout this great nation—consider whither they are tending—consider whence that tendency has arisen—consider by what means it is propagating itself: and then reflect upon the unexpected and extraordinary means by which ruin is overtaking every interest and hope of the country—and upon the absolute completeness of the ruin, when these means shall have worked their full effect. In a state of security apparently perfect, and of prosperity apparently complete—a small and fierce party, scattered through some of the Northern States, commenced a systematic and persistent agitation connected with the Black Race on this continent; and in the heart of their system lay this idea, that laws and institutions and rights and duties and interests of every description, ought to give way, if there was need of it, to the accomplishment of their designs. In the progress of time and events, and the ruin of political parties, this fundamental idea—which is the essence of lawlessness and anarchy—attaches itself in the public mind of some of the Northern States, to that particular aspect of the question of the Black Race which relates to the obligation, under the Federal Constitution, of delivering fugitive slaves; and laws of various kinds are passed, throwing the weight of State authority against the obligation of the very highest national law. And so the idea and process of disintegration, as the tendency to lawlessness and anarchy strengthens, has thus risen from the condition of a fanaticism, to the dignity of a principle recognized by States and asserted in laws. As if to warn men of the breadth of the ruin involved in this tendency, and to mark the extremity of the peril arising from its connection with the question of the Black Race, one of the slave States had already, under a similar, but directly opposite tendency, formally asserted its right, not only to obstruct the execution of the laws of the United States, but to nullify them absolutely, and upon its own sole and sovereign discretion; so that the spirit of lawlessness and anarchy, in its

absolute and universal tendency to disintegrate all things — moved, though not first, yet more rapidly and by more decisive acts, at the South than at the North.

4. Once more in the progress of time and events, and the ruin of political parties — the whole nation finds itself arrayed, in the last Presidential election, into two opposite parties, (of which the defeated one is mad enough to sub-divide itself into three); and this same question of the Black Race, both in the aspect of the rendition of fugitive slaves, and in the aspect of slavery in the Territories — and these same questions of supreme law and of lawlessness as connected therewith — mounting to the highest national importance, and apparently swallowing up all other questions, are resolved, so far as that election could resolve them. But the solution is every way remarkable. For while Mr. Lincoln is elected President — the majority of the nation is so decidedly against him, that he would have been beaten if the power of Congress to create uniform electoral districts had ever been exercised; nay, would have been beaten under the existing system, if all opposed to him had been allowed by the corruption or folly of parties to unite on one opponent. Moreover the solution is further remarkable, in this, that both Houses of Congress, and, as is alleged, the Supreme Court of the United States, held his most dangerous opinions to be unconstitutional: and it is still further remarkable in this, that Mr. Lincoln himself, while representing the Northern section of the anarchical tendency of the times, is known to repudiate the original principle of that faction concerning the rendition of fugitive slaves, — and is by universal consent, even of his candid opponents, an able, honest, and patriotic man. At the end of thirty years of working of the spirit we have been tracing, a decisive event had thus put the country in a posture where it would clearly appear whether the hereditary law-abiding spirit of our race remained, the great prop and safeguard of all our institutions; or whether the spirit of anarchy, already so signally manifested at both extremities of the nation, had so far poisoned the national life of our race at its fountain, that the time had come for one of those great explosions of human passion which fill so many melancholy pages in the history of our race.

5. It is not easy to conjecture, and it is impossible to say with

certainly, what would have occurred if the late presidential election had terminated differently from what it did, — in any one of the various ways in which a different termination was possible. This far we may now speak with certainty, that in some form or other, the spirit of turbulent fanaticism which had pervaded the States of the extreme North so long and so deeply, would not without a miracle, such as history does not record, have been allayed or composed under any defeat that was possible, in the state of national parties as they are now known to have existed at that time. For there was this fatal element, long concealed — not generally believed — but openly avowed since the secession of South Carolina — that secession, as the final and deliberate choice of the extreme South, was the point to which political opinion had been long and carefully trained, and political parties long and singly directed. This fatal training, added to the widely diffused spirit of anarchy, smarting under a defeat equally signal and unnecessary, and stimulated by considerations of the very highest importance connected with the question of the Black Race in every aspect of that question — produced the apparently sudden revolution which has already, when these pages are written, led the six cotton States (South Carolina, Mississippi, Florida, Alabama, Georgia and Louisiana) to pass separate acts of secession from the United States of America. Here then is the consummation of this spirit of lawlessness and anarchy, working as we have already said it universally works, unto the disintegration — the morcelment of all things; — the consummation of it, so far as to embrace all the States producing cotton, sugar, and rice, as their great staples. What is next to be determined is, the fate of the mixed slave States — those divided between farming and planting, (North Carolina, Tennessee, Arkansas, and Texas): and then the fate of the border slave States, (Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, Kentucky, Missouri): and then, we may confidently add, the fate of the nation. Whatever, in the meantime, it is of the last importance to bear in mind, shall be the conduct of the whole of the free States, and especially of the border free States (New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and Iowa), may be decisive alike of their own fate, and of that of all the rest, and of the nation itself for many generations.

6. Is it possible for any thoughtful person to suppose, that this spirit of reckless disregard of all existing institutions, has already accomplished all the results of which it is capable? What shall prevent it from swallowing up all the remaining slave States? What shall, after that is accomplished, prevent a counter-revolution in every one of those slave States? What shall prevent its taking some new direction with still more vehement force, throughout the whole North? What shall prevent a counter-revolution in every Northern State? And who can venture to hope, that a spirit which everywhere tramples under foot those institutions which everywhere have been esteemed most sacred, and everywhere despises the most venerable and the most cherished traditions of our country and our race; will finally slake its thirst in any thing but human blood, or fail to assuage its insatiable rapacity by universal plunder? Cannot even the blind see, that when laws are violated in the name of morality and order, and constitutions are set at nought in the name of liberty and security, and revolutions are accomplished by terror and conducted under the guidance of irresistible fanaticism; that there can be no result to such a career, as long as it has way, but the destruction of everything that human governments are instituted to protect; and that at every step of the career, the overthrow of every salutary power and the disintegration of every healthful force of society, more and more confirms the existence and the reign of universal anarchy? It is as if God should destroy every principle of cohesion in the physical universe, and leave every separate force in it working to the destruction of all things. It is as if he should destroy every idea of subjection in the moral universe, and leave the passions of men to work out all the horrors of an infinite disorder. It is as the steady working of omnipotent force, unto the production of universal helplessness. It is, when it shall pervade the earth, the realization of the conjectures of those who expound the divine predictions concerning the condition in which *The Son of Man* will find all nations at his second coming — the universal reign of lawlessness after the universal disintegration of every element capable of restraining it. What we say is — not that these results are inevitable: God forbid! But we do say they are natural — they are imminent — they are far more

to be apprehended, than what has already occurred, both in the North and in the South, was to be apprehended thirty years ago. And we may say these things with a greater confidence of an insight of the terrible future, and a more eager beseeching of our generation to beware; since during more than thirty years we have not ceased to lift up an unheeded testimony, both against the principles and the proceedings, both at the North and at the South—whose frightful results the country is now beginning to realize.

II. 1. Let us now seek, amidst this chaos, for some ground of hope and effort. Throughout the eighteen free States, society is supposed to be under the control of the Republican party. As indicated by the presidential election in November last, it may be conceded that the majority in all those States, did at that time, believe the election of Mr. Lincoln to the Presidency, to be the best of the alternatives then offered to their choice; and it may be further conceded, though it is not strictly accurate, that, at present, the local political and military power, in all those States, is in the hands of the Republican party. But it is also true that a minority in those States, numerically almost as large as the entire voting population of the fifteen slave States, voted against Mr. Lincoln—and are thoroughly opposed to the distinctive principles of the Republican party. It is also undeniable that a very large number of those who voted for Mr. Lincoln, are far more Whigs or Americans than they are Republicans:—and it is equally certain that a very large number of the Republican party itself, strictly speaking, are patriotic men, who, while they preferred the success of their party to the success of any other party, prefer the peace, the prosperity, and the security of their country above anything that could be obtained by the triumph of their party. If any political result in the future, therefore, can be considered certain, it is certain, that a revolution in opinion, more or less decided, will manifest itself throughout the free States, whenever the issue is clearly put to them between their country and any political party. And it is equally certain, that whatever party shall hurry those States, by whatever means, into the horrors of civil war, and the anguish of that impending anarchy of which we have spoken; will perish by a counter-revolu-

tion, just as apt to be bloody there as in any other portion of the nation.

2. In the position of all the slave States there are peculiar circumstances much overlooked, both amongst themselves and others; but nevertheless decisive in the long run. No force, however small, but will accomplish its end, if sufficient time be allowed: even that which is infinitely minute, if it operates through an infinite period. The six cotton States appear to us to have taken their course in such a temper, with such purposes, upon such principles, and under such foregone conclusions, that they neither desire to return to their former position, nor would at present agree to anything that they believe would accomplish that result. It is, of course, possible that we are mistaken in this painful conclusion, and we should heartily rejoice to know that we are: but, seeing no ground on which we can doubt that the case stands thus, neither do we see any on which we can avoid stating our belief. It would be gross injustice to many thousands of patriotic men in all the cotton States, to suppose that either of those States would have been allowed to take the course it has pursued, without a desperate political struggle in its own bosom; if the circumstances of these men, in each of those States, had appeared to them to allow of resistance to the organized force which swept society away. There are also thousands of persons in all those States, who even now consider it a slander and a reproach, that ulterior designs are ascribed to those who direct this secession movement, which it seems apparent to all mankind, except themselves, are not only certain to be realized if the movement is permanently sustained, but which were amongst the earliest and most powerful causes of the long cherished desire to be relieved from the real restraints of the Federal Government, and the imaginary perils and injuries of the Federal Union. In the actual condition of the States which have already seceded, as we understand that condition and the manner in which it has been brought about, we deem it perfectly obvious that a counter-revolution must manifest itself in every one of them — equally as decided, and perhaps more violent, than the revolution which has already occurred. That counter-revolution may be in a direction more and more fatal — bringing into uncontrolled power, parties wholly unfit and

unworthy to possess it. It may be in a direction eminently favorable to the security and prosperity of those cotton States, and terminating in their restoration to the Union, under the lead of a party whose elements now lie scattered, or even as yet totally undeveloped. But the present revolution, in its very nature, its causes, and its designs — must go deeper, in one direction or the other. In *which* direction, depends in our opinion, in the first instance, in a great degree, upon these contingencies: 1. The conduct of the present ruling faction in those States; its forbearance on the one hand, or its violence on the other: 2. The conduct of the Federal Government towards those States; as it may be firm and yet temperate, or as it may be vacillating and timid: 3. The conduct of the slave States continuing in the Union; as they may share the madness of the six seceding States, or as they may arrest the pestilence at the cotton line, and by their wisdom and courage restore the Union: 4. The conduct of the free States, and especially those along the slave border; as they shall obstinately persist in fomenting opinions and performing acts touching the whole question of the Black Race, which they can now clearly see must involve the country in one common ruin, or as they, by a common consent, or by a counter-revolution in their own bosom, restore public opinion to a condition under which slave States may safely live in peace with them. Under such circumstances it is easy to see, how great and difficult is the task laid on true statesmen, everywhere, and how immense and how dubious are the issues submitted to them.

3. The remaining nine slave States, of which five are border States, and four are mixed slave States, have in each of these classes peculiarities as marked as those which distinguish the cotton States; yet as the whole nine occupy a similar position at the present moment, with regard to the revolution which has swept over the cotton States; they may, for the sake of brevity, be thrown together in developing the great ideas we are endeavoring to disclose. What the exact issue will be in these nine States — or whether it will be similar in them all — or in which direction the prevailing opinion will settle, if different courses are taken — are questions which it is impossible to determine at this time. But it is very obvious, that if the whole nine — or even the greater

part of them, embracing the leading and powerful States, refuse to unite in the movement taken by the six cotton States, that movement must necessarily prove a failure, both as to its avowed, and as to any concealed object; a counter-revolution in the cotton States becomes presently inevitable; and those cotton States must ultimately accommodate themselves to the policy, whatever it may be, adopted by the other and leading States, instead of being able to force those far more powerful than themselves, to follow blindly and servilely a course disapproved by them, and which rests for its ultimate reason, upon nothing better than the sudden caprice of South Carolina, or her chronic hatred of the National Union. There are immense considerations, altogether independent of the real merits of the great cause which is under trial — why the course dictated by South Carolina, and adopted by the other cotton States, should be steadfastly rejected. Amongst these are such as follow: 1. This method by secession annihilates the very idea of all force in permanent constitutional union, or common government over sovereign States, and establishes as inherent in all possible future unions, the idea of anarchy, and deprives liberty forever of the possibility of being either stable or strong: 2. The method of secession, by *separate* State action, is founded on illusions utterly fatal and absurd, that the American people are not a *nation* — the Federal Constitution not a government — the American people not bound to be loyal except to local authorities, which being assumed, condemns this continent to be the everlasting habitation of every thing feeble, factious, and extravagant: 3. The adoption of ordinances of secession, by conventions called by ordinary Legislatures — without allowing the people to determine by a previous sovereign act whether or not the convention shall exist, and by a subsequent sovereign act whether or not its proceedings shall have force — destroys the very idea of the sovereignty of the people, makes constitutional liberty and security impossible, and invites factions, in proportion as they are corrupt or incompetent, to usurp and to abuse sovereign power: 4. The utter refusal to consult with States, all of which were united by the highest human obligations — and many of which were involved in perils the very same in kind and higher in degree — is a line of conduct reckless in itself, insulting to all

others, apparently adopted with the purpose of rendering all peaceful, considerate, or even decorous arrangements impossible, and necessarily jeopard, in the result reached, the profitable continuance of slavery, if not its very existence, in the greater part of the slave States, and amongst them the most powerful, the most loyal, and the most enlightened of them all. At the present moment two most important truths are perfectly distinct. The *first* is, that the action hitherto taken in the States whose position we are now considering,—no matter what that action may lead to—involves a fundamental dissent from the conduct pursued by the six seceding States—and contemplates redress in a different way, and upon opposite principles. The *second* is, that a very great portion of each of these nine States, probably the majority of the people in most of them—possibly in all of them,—are warmly attached to the Union,—are resolutely determined to maintain their loyalty to the nation as their nation, at the same time that they maintain their loyalty to the particular States of which they are citizens, and are far more inclined to compose existing difficulties, than to drive matters to extremity in any direction.

4. These facts and considerations, taken in detail and taken all together, are worthy of the very highest consideration;—and whatever the issue of events may be, they reveal to the people and to those they trust, the grounds on which, and the manner in which, the country may be saved: and they disclose to posterity the pregnant and enduring truth, that at the utmost peril of the country the *people* would have saved it, if they had been bravely and wisely led. For under fair and true statesmanship, the chances are more than equal, in the *first* place, to rally the immense masses of the nine slave States whose people are now pondering their course, to such an action as will make their position secure in the Union, and satisfy them: in the *second* place, to secure such a treatment of the subject of secession by the Federal Administration, as will at once give efficacy to the laws, and avoid armed collision, except in repelling force by force: in the *third* place, to seek and to rely upon, such a reaction among the masses of the people in the free States, as will, by a common consent, or if it becomes necessary, by hurling from power those who stand

in the way, make manifest the determination of those masses to put an end to the reign of that atheistical and relentless fanaticism, which is the original cause of the ruin that stares us all in the face: and in the *fourth* place, to expect and await with confidence, the inevitable counter-revolution in the States which have already seceded, which will disabuse the minds of men of the delusion that the revolution there has been, as to the popular masses, either spontaneous or cordial, and restore those States to their true position in the confederacy. It is in this manner that results, equally indispensable and glorious, are attainable, — results capable also, no doubt, of being defeated; and that in ways far too various to be traced here. But when defeated, let us never forget that they who defeat them will share in full measure with us, all present evils, and will bear alone the execrations of posterity. And when defeated, what will remain for this generation, will be to realize the calamities of that frightful condition we have traced in the commencement of this paper; — or, as we have attempted to show on a former occasion, to construct even upon the line between the free and the slave States, a new and central power — competent at once to preserve all our institutions, to develop our national progress, and to direct the destinies of this continent.

5. Besides the special considerations which we have developed, as particularly relevant to the condition of our country, and the manner in which her destiny may be retrieved: there are many other considerations of a more general kind, and of the highest force, all pointing in the same direction, which it behooves every man to ponder deeply, before he despairs of his country, and before he lays his hands rudely on our existing institutions, in the vain hope of something better. Of these, there are two so præminent, that we ought to direct special attention to them. The *first* relates to that view of the subject which discloses the indestructible power of life in such a nation as this, and the length and depth and breadth of the agony which it can endure, and yet live. They who know the past of human affairs, and they who reflect on that eternal logic which is of the essence of things and events, know that a nation like this *cannot die*. It is hardly possible to conceive how it can *even be murdered*; but *die*

it cannot. It would be as easy to conceive that France could be blotted from the map of Europe as one of its greatest nations, and restored to the condition it occupied before its conquest by Cæsar ; as to conceive of the American nation being annihilated, its sublime career cut short, its boundless possessions parcelled out, and an ignominious retinue of numberless aristocracies, democracies, dukedoms, and principalities, permanently filling its seat of empire and of glory. After eighteen centuries of anguish, Italy, hailed by the acclamations of mankind, is purging herself in a baptism of blood from the very condition which men are preparing for us ; and the consuming instinct of her restored life is for that very *national unity* which we are expected to sacrifice, and in default of which she has suffered every form of evil, in every stage of civilization, under every kind of government. What have they to offer us, in exchange for our national unity, but sorrow without an object — and degradation without a limit — accompanied with struggles and suffering for its recovery, renewed, and suppressed in blood, and renewed for evermore — until in some distant age, perhaps, it shall be restored amidst the rejoicings of all peoples ! This blind and fierce spirit of anarchy which has fastened upon the extremities of the nation, and is threatening to eat into its heart, has no aspect more startling, than its frightful antagonism to the absolute tendency and the total civilization of the age, in which it has made itself manifest. The *second* of the two great considerations alluded to, relates to the dominion and purpose of God over and concerning our country. The revolting disregard which this whole movement towards destruction exhibits towards God's dealings with our country, the shocking conceptions it proclaims of our mission as a people, compared with the conception of that mission as indicated by God himself, present almost the saddest aspect of the case. Nor is it the least remarkable feature of the lawless spirit which underlies the entire revolution, that while in both extremities of the nation it fastens upon the same idea — the slavery of the African race — as the controlling idea of God in all his purposes concerning us ; it should give that idea its utmost destructiveness to us, and its utmost offensiveness to God, by making it work in directions precisely opposite. Is it conceivable that God should teach his

children at the North, that his highest purpose concerning the American people is, that they should extinguish African slavery ; and at the same moment teach his children at the South, that his highest purpose concerning the American people is, that they should perpetuate African slavery ? Rather is it not utterly inconceivable, that he should have taught any of them that his purposes concerning African slavery, or the African race, in any way whatever contain his chief purposes concerning the white race on this continent ? A more melancholy instance can scarcely be produced in all history, of the destructive extent to which religious opinion can be made to take the prevailing hue of a fierce enthusiasm, or an intolerant fanaticism, which reigns around it. It is not in this manner, on the one side or the other, that the tens of thousands of God's children, scattered over this great empire like salt which has *not* lost its savour, interpret the teachings of his word, the indications of his providence, or the tokens of his infinite mercy towards us. It is not in any such sense of the mission of our country, or our race, that the people everywhere, have so lately come before God, in a great service of national humiliation, confessing their sins, and praying for his gracious interposition in this time of sore need. Who is authorized to say, that God has not heard the cry of his people ? Who will dare to say, that God is not able to save ? In the utmost extremity of Israel, God said to them by Moses, Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of God, which he will shew to you to-day.

III. 1. At present, and during a long course of preceding years, it has been the very general impression that Negro slavery was the *direct*, if not the *single* difficulty, in all the commotions of which we have been speaking. As far as these commotions have had a moral and religious element, and have manifested themselves in the bosom of the different Christian denominations, this wide-spread impression has probably been true. But in other respects the connection of Negro slavery with these commotions, throughout, has been *indirect* ; and its moral and religious aspect has had little significance, except as the abolition movement has been *free-thinking* in religion, and as political and sectional parties have coerced religious opinion in particular directions, for party and sectional purposes. The nullification movement many years

ago, in South Carolina, related to slavery only in the most indirect way — and in no connection with any moral or religious question. It was a question of revenue, taxation, commerce, tariffs, wealth: a false theory of political economy enraged by the peculiar condition of labor. More recently, the commotion about slavery in the Territories, has been a struggle for political power, aggravated on the side of the North by the urgency of its numerous emigrant population for cheap homes in fertile regions. And at the present moment, the States which have seceded, are of all the slave States the very ones which would not have seceded, and the slave States which are most anxious to preserve the Union are the very ones which would have promptly seceded, if the current impression of the case was true and complete. If at any time within the last thirty years, a revolution in production, in trade, in commerce, in any thing, had wrought a thorough change in the general opinion of the South, touching — not the essential nature — but the incidental advantages of slavery in a political and a financial point of view; of course, no one would ever have heard of secession in the South — or even seen the remotest approach to the existing state of opinion at the North. It is the idea of power — power to be diminished by remaining in the Union and to be incalculably augmented by leaving it; the idea of wealth, of conquest, of advancement — all of them, we are thoroughly convinced, in the highest degree illusive and fatal; but it is these ideas — far more than any disgust that the North condemns slavery as immoral, or any apprehension that slavery will be disturbed, or slaves stolen, or the South annoyed in the Union — that pervades the present dominant party in the cotton States, and enabled it to precipitate them into revolution. How far this aspect of the case aggravates or alleviates the difficulty of dealing with it, in any hope of such an issue as we consider fortunate, must depend on many considerations which can not be discussed here. In any event, it seems clear that they who would heal a malady must understand its exact nature. And if it is never healed, they who eagerly desire that it should be, owe to themselves and to posterity a fair and complete statement of the case, and of the remedy they propose for it.

2. Human servitude, considered in its widest sense, and of

which hereditary slavery as it exists in our slave States is the extreme form—may be discussed in the light of Divine Revelation—or in the light of the Law of Nature—or in the light of the political and municipal institutions of the countries where it exists. Considered in this last aspect—there ought to be no dispute concerning it, and there can be none fairly, in this country, except in a single point of view—namely, its existence in the national territory, which we will speak of separately. For, undeniably, each State has the complete and exclusive right, to determine concerning it as a strictly domestic institution; and, undeniably, neither any other State, nor the government which is common to all the States, has any power to interfere with it, or concerning it, in any State. And this is not only matter of constitutional obligation on one side, and uncontrolled right on the other; but the plainest dictates of prudence, and the clearest obligations of morality, impose upon the States, and the general government, the duty of a simple, sincere, and faithful observance of all that is implied, as well as all that is expressed, in these restrictions. Massachusetts has no right, of any kind, to assail slavery in South Carolina,—nor has South Carolina any right of any sort to encourage the introduction of slavery into Massachusetts: and any attempt on the part of the General Government, directly or indirectly, to favour any such endeavour on the part of either of them, is a foolish and wicked perversion of its own nature. Nor is there any plea that can be offered, either by the General Government, or by any State, for departing from this clear line of mutual duty, which is not immoral in itself, and revolutionary in its tendency. Moreover the prompt and cordial performance by all parties, towards each other, of all the mutual duties binding upon them under the Federal Constitution touching every subject, and amongst the rest the subject of slavery, and amongst the duties connected with slavery the rendition of fugitive slaves, of which we will speak separately; besides being every way binding before God and man, is the sure, the wise, and the peaceful way to promote all the interests of all the parties, and to secure the lasting glory and prosperity of the country.

3. When we undertake to determine this, or indeed any question, under what we call the Law of Nature, we encounter the

most serious difficulties at every step. What we shall say, therefore, on this topic, must be in subordination to what has just been said under the aspect of our civil and political obligations, and what we shall say presently under the aspect of revealed truth and duty. Besides the statement of the Law of Nature, recorded and reiterated in the Word of God, of which we do not speak at present, there are other — perhaps numerous, but certainly indistinct, and perhaps contradictory utterances of that great and permanent law. At the head of these utterances we may place that which the human reason discloses: next to that, perhaps, the common impulses of the human soul: then, perhaps, the current opinions and beliefs of the human race: and then, which in some respects ought to be held most valid of all — the common and apparently inevitable, if not voluntary state of our race in all ages — as the best concrete expression of its reason, its impulses, and its current belief — and therefore of the Law of its Nature in its present state. If we will reflect carefully on each of these utterances of the Law of Nature touching this vast topic of human servitude, we will perceive how narrow is the foothold they afford to support us in disloyalty towards the civil and political institutions of our country, much less to sustain us in rejecting the revealed will of God. (1.) The *human reason* teaches with clearness, that if there can be such a thing, or such an idea, as *property*, the highest form of it — nay, the very basis of it — is the right which every one has to himself: and just as clearly, that the claim of property by the Law of Nature, on the part of one person in another person, is founded in the rejection of the very foundation of the idea of property, since my right to have another rests on my previous right to myself. On the other hand, human reason teaches us that property in ourself is as capable of being forfeited, limited, or alienated, as any other property. For example, the right of existence is higher than our property in ourself; and it is as absurd to say that I may not part absolutely with the latter, in order to secure the former, as it is to say I may not limit my property in myself, in order to make my existence more enduring, or even more comfortable. And the very nature of human society is such, that the liberty, as well as the life and property of every one, passes by the fact of the existence of

society, from its absolute personal form, into a modified form determinable only by the aggregate will—which will *ought* to be determined by the will of God. But as the human race is in rebellion against God—human reason lands the problem very nearly in a paradox. (2.) If we appeal next for guidance to the *common impulses of the human soul*, in order to have this great question of human servitude interpreted, we obtain a response equally vague, but far more vehement than before. Surely it is, and it has always been, the desire of every human being to be free from restraint—the passionate desire of our race to possess what each member of it, in his particular condition, meant by liberty. And the aggregate impulse of the race in that direction, is more powerful and is better regulated to-day than it ever was before,—and the hope of true, and stable, and universal freedom, as the final inheritance of all mankind, may be more rationally cherished, than at any former period. But the wisest men and the freest people know the best—that this personal desire of freedom from restraint is no evidence whatever that restraint is wrong; and that this universal impulse towards what they mean by liberty, totally fails—of itself—in proving that they who cherish it would do aught but mischief, if God were to gratify all their desires. It is one of the most sorrowful aspects of human nature—this consuming impulse towards liberty and equality—this lasting desire of the good and the wise that it might be gratified—this total impossibility of its gratification, except under special conditions of advancement, reached as yet by comparatively small portions of our race. (3.) And now if we turn to the *common opinion and belief of the human race*, as the true expositor of that law of their nature under the light of which the institutions of the most civilized states are to be abolished and the inspired teachings of God are to be silenced; we may take one firm step, and then all is chaos, which thickens as we advance. Assuredly there is a sense of good and of true—and therefore of right and just—universal in our race; and a sense, moreover, that these things apply to, and ought to regulate, all the conditions and relations of man—servitude in all its forms amongst the rest. If there was ever an opinion and belief common to our race, that servitude in its widest sense was contrary to the nature of man; then the

race had before it always, in the actual condition of the larger part of it, the clearest proof that the belief was absurd. If there had ever been such a common belief strong enough to form the basis of practical life; then half the race would have immediately perished from want — or universal rapine would have become its habitual condition. The belief has, no doubt, been common to our race in all time, that every one ought to enjoy all the gifts of God, and amongst the rest the inestimable one of personal freedom, so far as was compatible with the circumstances in which God's providence had placed each person — that is, so far as was compatible with the will of the Giver of all good, thus made known to every person. And this belief is true and just. But what is established by it is, that according to the Law of Nature as explained by the spontaneous belief of mankind, servitude in every form may, though of itself indifferent, become right or wrong, good or bad, according to the circumstances of each particular case. And beyond this unquestionable truth — he who will enquire will get no intelligible response. (4.) The last of the four utterances of the Law of Nature which we have specified, is *the actual execution of the law*, as that is exhibited to us in the common state of the human race, in all ages, and in every stage of civilization. Here there is no possibility of mistake. The testimony is as unanimous, as it is frightful and universal. The different races, the different nations, the different tribes, the different families, the different individuals — all, every where, have felt themselves to be naturally impelled to reduce each other into a condition of subjection — and have felt themselves to be naturally permitted, upon a change of fortune, to submit to a state of subjection. Nor is it possible to doubt that the natural and universal conduct of mankind, as clearly proves that men are as thoroughly convinced they ought to be masters, as their conduct could possibly prove they were convinced that they ought not to be slaves. Those conditions of mankind which are alleged to resemble most nearly the condition claimed to be natural to man, are the very conditions in which servitude, in some form or other, is the most spontaneous and complete; and it is in conditions of advanced civilization that the extreme forms of servitude gradually expire — unless some peculiar element in the

state of society opposes an insuperable barrier to its extinction. It takes nothing from this boundless testimony, to assert that the dreary conclusion it establishes is contrary to the reason, the impulses, and the beliefs of mankind: for if the assertion were true, it only shows that mankind cannot be, what mankind asserts, desires, and believes it should be. And the more desolate the conviction thus begotten may be, the more are we compelled to look — for the mitigation of human servitude — not to revolution based on our notions of the Law of Nature, but to the wise and temperate amelioration of existing institutions, under the influence of the love of God. And the more all other rules of judgment and conduct fail us, the more ought we to feel obliged to submit ourselves to the guidance of God, in matters which concern us so nearly as these now do. What remains, therefore, is to consider the question of human servitude in the light of divine revelation.

4. It is in the Word of God that this great problem is completely solved. Human servitude, in all its forms, is one of the badges of the fallen condition of the human race; and every incident of it, that aggravates any particular form of it, or that augments the severity of all the forms of it from the very lightest to the very heaviest, is a separate proof that our natural condition is one of sin and misery. And whatever revolt there may be in human nature against any form of servitude, is a kind of testimony to the original freedom in which man was created in the image of God, and to the remaining susceptibility of his depraved nature to be restored; while the utter inability of the race to escape this part of its deplorable condition, shows how deeply the grounds and reasons of that condition are laid in its nature. A fallen race, lying under the wrath of God and the condemnation of his holy law — but having his promise of deliverance even in this life and of immortal blessedness in a better life to come — is making its way, in this condition of probation, through the ages and across the earth. The accumulated experience of the entire existence of the race, and the uniform course of divine providence, and the explicit declarations of God's Word, show us in the clearest manner, that the career of such a race, in such a state, and yet under such a probation, must necessarily exhibit

much that is, so to speak, unavoidably *incident* to such a case, in some respects alleviating, and in some respects aggravating its ordinary, average condition. War is inevitable; sometimes in its result glorious and blessed, sometimes frightful in all its issues; but war, so far from being of itself, and to all who engage in it either just or sinful, is often atrocious, and often amongst the highest duties of mankind. Sickness is the product of God's just sentence of death upon our sinful race, and is of itself a temporal evil covering the whole earth; yet it is often made an unspeakable blessing, and no one ventures to say is of itself sinful. Sorrow and affliction are brought on us in innumerable forms, and from every quarter, and often by means of our truest, and noblest, and wisest impulses;—in every instance they are incidents of sin, direct or remote, but perhaps not in one instance of a million of the sin of him who suffers. Poverty, and its consequent, suffering, is of itself one of the direst and most universal calamities of mankind; and yet it is the parent of many of our highest virtues and attainments—and so far from being sinful of itself, is the subject of many of the most tender and urgent provisions both of the law of God and the Gospel of Christ. It is to this great class of *incidents* of the actual condition of our race, that human servitude in all its forms belongs. Existing, like all we have named, and multitudes besides, because our condition is just what it is—a condition of sin and misery in a state of probation; wrought out inevitably, in some form or other, in the bosom of such a condition; modified indefinitely, by every circumstance that affects any considerable portion of the race; but utterly incapable of being permanently and universally abolished, while our race continues in a state of sin and misery, attended with probation. It seems to us as absurd to call the relation of master and servant (in any form of servitude) sinful of itself, or to expect the relation to cease upon earth; as it is to call the relation between a sick man and a well one, an afflicted man and a happy man, a rich man and a poor one, sinful of itself, or expect either of them to come to an end. And this, it seems to us, is the simple, the rational, and the scriptural account of human servitude in all its possible aspects, and in its essential nature in the sight of God.

5. If we acknowledge the sacred Scriptures to be the divine

rule of our faith and our practice, there ought to be an end to all extreme opinions, and all violent proceedings, on this entire subject. From the days of Abraham, to the death of the last inspired Apostle, there is one uniform doctrine, one uniform practice, one unchanging aspect of the whole matter — presented by God for the guidance of mankind. Throughout the total revelation which God has made to man — throughout the immense period embracing the dispensations of Abraham, of Moses, and of Christ, — human servitude, Abrahamic, Jewish, Christian, and heathen — and the heathen aspect of it, such as was presented in every nation of antiquity, Asiatic, African and European, down to and after the period of universal dominion by the Romans; we have this immense subject exhibited to us, in all its possible bearings, by God himself. Never, in a single instance, is it represented to us as a thing good in itself: never, in a single instance, as a thing sinful in itself: always as a thing actually existing, always to be expected, allowed by God, considered and treated in his law, regulated by his providence, wholly indifferent as concerning his grace, and to enter into our final account to him, both as we may be masters and as we may be servants, in the light of our faithful discharge or our wicked neglect of our duties to each other in that relation. As masters, the measure of our authority is the measure of our **guilt**, if we neglect the duties binding on us, or abuse the power we possess: so that the slavery which exists amongst us, carries this responsibility to a height which, to all thoughtful Christian persons, gives the institution one of its heaviest burdens. To consider the relation, on the side of the master, one merely of profit to himself, is to forfeit at once every justification for its continuance; while, on the other hand, to rob the relation wholly of that aspect, can be founded only on the notion that all servitude is sinful, or else on some fanatical idea of justice or charity, which if rendered practical would put an end to society, by putting an end to all motive for any one to obtain any sort of service from another. That every form of servitude ought to be ameliorated continually, even if we are sure it can never be abolished, is as clear as that poverty should be alleviated though we know it can never be prevented, or that sickness should be relieved, though it is certain it will recur forever. Clear as may be the

justification of every form of servitude so far as the mere question of *sin* is concerned — and perfect as may be the right to persist in the extreme form of it, so far as the civil power is concerned — there are a thousand considerations, personal and public, moral and political, which may so bear upon individuals and communities, as to make it their clear duty, under given circumstances, to put an end to the hereditary slavery which exists amongst us, or under given circumstances to make it improper to attempt it, or impossible to accomplish it. It is absurd, therefore, if not monstrous, to contend that vast regions of our country are morally bound to the last extremity and as their chief duty, to labour for the more secure establishment and the more effectual perpetuation of negro slavery; and equally so to array public opinion, and to direct political parties, in other vast portions of the country, to the repression or the destruction of it, on any pretext at all, much less any connected with its moral nature. We have already shown that a faithful observance of our constitutional obligations would put an end to all such opinions and practices; and that there is no justification for any of the principles on which they rest, or the proceedings to which they lead, to be found in natural law. And now it seems clear, that the only infallible rule of conduct, God's blessed Word, condemns in the most positive manner, all the pretexts concerning negro slavery, whether at the North or the South, upon which the public mind has been lashed into madness. Slavery is an institution, which revolutions neither perpetuate nor abolish, except under conditions wholly accidental. And if the anarchical spirit, whose seditious career we have traced, finally triumphs and this nation is destroyed — the real problem to be afterwards worked out will be, the ultimate dominion of the White race, or of a mixed race essentially African, over the cotton region of this continent. Is the inaugurating of that problem, worth the ruin of this great nation?

IV. 1. In attempting to develop the topic which remains, we are fully aware of the difficulties of the task. Both at the North and at the South, there are great parties thoroughly organized and acting in precisely opposite directions as to opinion, but one direction as effective as the other toward the common object of their labors — namely, the tearing of the nation to pieces. They

who agree in nothing else, agree in the common desire for that result, which involves our national ruin. In the meantime, the immense popular masses at the North which have only partially coöperated with the organized party bent on destruction, or have fallen into minorities openly resisting that party — are neither organized in fact, nor of one accord amongst themselves, except upon the single point, that they are suddenly awakened to the extreme peril of the situation, and are rapidly settling into a resolute purpose to avert the danger, if it is still possible. In the whole South, the condition of affairs is similar, but more perilous. The disruption of the Democratic party at Charleston and at Baltimore, is susceptible of but three possible interpretations: it was an act of mere passion — or it was an act of deep intention, designed to produce exactly what has followed — or it was an act looking to the reconstruction of that party and to new endeavors for its permanent triumph as a national party. Recent events tend to show, that the disruption was made in the fixed sense of the second of these three possible interpretations; or at any rate, in the contemplation, and perfect preparation of many leading men to take that alternative, even if they are not chargeable with having intentionally procured it. What occurred was, that the cotton growing South suddenly awoke to a consciousness, that a great and perfectly organized party in her bosom, was precipitating state after state into secession; while in every seceding state — even in South Carolina — masses of the people, stunned by the suddenness and vehemence and thorough organization of the movement, were borne along by it, or made resistance only on collateral points, or remained in dissatisfied silence as the storm swept over them. And in all the remaining slave states, state after state became suddenly the theatre of a concerted agitation propagated originally from South Carolina, and tending everywhere to the same violent result, by the same seditious proceedings, in the venerable names of state sovereignty and constitutional power. In these latter states, the resistance on the part of the community to this revolutionary fanaticism, was more in accordance with what became a free people; and whatever the issue may be, the most of them, possibly every one of them, will reach it with a decorum, a gravity, and a public decency inseparable even in death itself

from all true greatness, on all great occasions. But these great popular masses throughout the fifteen slave states — embracing all men who were not ready to rush into immediate secession, and embracing, therefore, the immense majority of the people in that half of the nation — were taken by surprise — cut up into three mutually hostile political parties — disorganized by an infinite diversity of opinion — and destitute for the moment of great leaders to whom they could turn with a common consent. Rapidly, and by a movement almost spontaneous, public opinion, overborne for the moment in the six seceding states, and trembling in the balance in several other states, appears to us to be consolidating in the greater number and the most powerful of those states, in a determinate manner, and upon fixed points. In them there is none of that frantic hostility to the union which has been ostentatiously manifested in other places ; but on the contrary, an avowed attachment to the union, and a declared purpose to maintain it, if it can be done consistently with their security, their honor, and their rights. In them, there is no disposition to contend for extreme rights, or to demand conditions which in changed circumstances they would not grant themselves, much less to fly to arms by way of preliminary menace, or to look to foreign nations for aid in the execution of any designs present or future ; but on the contrary, there is an upright and an outspoken desire to adjust all existing troubles, and if possible to secure the future, upon terms of perfect equity and equality, such as ought to satisfy true men, and such as true men ought spontaneously to grant. Now it is not to confirmed Abolitionists of the North, nor is it to confirmed Secessionists of the South, that any suggestions of peace need be made, or any terms of honorable composition need be propounded, which look to the preservation of a country which they do not profess to love, and the salvation of institutions which they own they abhor. But it is to the great, true, and faithful people of the glorious American Nation that must not be destroyed, no matter of what sovereign state they may be citizens, and no matter how much they may now appear to be scattered and disorganized ; that suggestions of peace, and justice, and fraternity, looking to endless and boundless glory and prosperity, may be offered, with a good hope through God, that they may enter into the mass of

human thought, and be felt according to the wisdom that may be in them.

2. Let it be observed, that the free states and the slave states occupy in some respects totally different positions, relatively to the difficulties about slavery, and to the ground on which those difficulties are to be adjusted. With the North, the whole affair is a sentiment — an opinion. With the South, it is an affair of life and death. The North has not one dollar of estate at stake — the South has four thousand millions of dollars invested in slaves. The North has not one dollar of income directly dependent on slavery — the South has an annual income of two hundred and fifty millions dependent directly on slave labour. Moreover, there are no negro slaves among the nineteen millions of people in the eighteen free states — so that all questions of a national aspect tending to influence slavery, are perfectly void of force as to the interior peace, quiet, and security, of all these eighteen states; whereas the fifteen slave states have four millions of slaves dispersed through their eight millions of white people, and every national question that can, in any of its bearings, either agitate or quiet this vast slave population, is of itself a question, between different nations, of war or peace. Still further, the institution of slavery has no necessary bearing whatever, upon the social, economical, personal or political condition of any state or individual at the North; whereas it is thoroughly interwoven with every fibre of society at the South — and as an institution is so pervading in its effects wherever it exists, that a community long trained in the forms of life connected with it, does not incur the change involved in its destruction, except under some most powerful impulse. And again, this nation was once a nation composed exclusively of slave states — and if in the progress of events the greater part of the states become free states — every consideration of decency and good faith obliges those thus changing their condition to be more and more, instead of less and less, observant of the duties and even the proprieties they owe to those who remain in the condition once common to all. And, to suggest nothing more, the preponderating power of the free states in the Union, added to the unscrupulous and disloyal principles avowed and propagated, to a greater or less extent, in every one of them

during the last thirty years; obliges the North, by every consideration of prudence, of equity, and of magnanimity, to concede to the South all that the spirit of their mutual engagements require, instead of striving to rob her of every security which is not expressed in the narrowest letter of the law. So clear is this controlling aspect of the subject, and so deeply does it enter into the convictions of all just men, that, on the one hand, the whole feeling of loyalty to the Union in the South, is connected with an abiding confidence that the North will act as becomes her in this emergency; and on the other hand, with an unshaken purpose, in the Union or out of it, to vindicate the security, the equality, and the rights, of slave States. It is upon these two points — can the South rely upon the North — and can the South maintain her vital interests in union — that public opinion in the slave States which have not seceded, is struggling at this moment. For our own part, thoroughly convinced that both of those questions ought to be answered in the affirmative, we must not disguise that the thousands of loyal and patriotic men who have reached an opposite conclusion, and under it have been precipitated, by the force of a trained and long organized conspiracy, unto fatal proceedings; are able to render reasons for their want of confidence, to which coming ages will say, the North ought to have given earlier and more considerate heed. It is idle to attempt here, a statement of particular aggressions, upon a case so large, so long continued, so aggravating, and so palpable. If there is one sentiment perfectly cordial, and perfectly unanimous throughout the fifteen slave States, it is that they have just cause of complaint; a sentiment in which it is extremely probable, that the actual majority of the entire North would to some extent concur. Nay, the very form of any amicable settlement that can ever be made, reveals the true nature of the case — as every possible statement of it must show.

3. There are two points upon which the South has made up its mind, and which are decisive, one way or the other, of the whole matter; and upon which the course which the North may take, will either arrest the farther spread of the secession pestilence, and under firm and temperate treatment, as we have before shown, will probably bring back the seceding States; or will probably throw the whole nation into a state of political convulsion, the

end of which no man can conjecture, and no living man will see. These two points relate, 1. To the fair and complete execution of the provisions of the Federal Constitution, made expressly in favor of property in slaves — and most especially the provision for the rendition of fugitive slaves: 2. To the recognition of the perfect equality of the slave States with the free States, under the Federal Constitution, in all things — and most especially in the matter of Federal Territories. We will briefly treat of each of these points separately. And as it appears to us very clear that adequate power exists under the Federal Constitution to settle both points in a fair, complete, and satisfactory manner — we will not enter upon the discussion of any of the proposed changes in that instrument. There are also several incidental questions, such as slavery in the District of Columbia, the migration of slaves from one slave State to another, and the like, which we shall not discuss; since, as we doubt not, the settlement of the real question will draw after it the settlement of the rest; and a refusal to settle them renders all discussion of the others idle.

4. If any one will compare the unquestionable right of the owners of slaves, secured by the Federal Constitution, to have them delivered to them in the States to which they may escape, with what has occurred during many past years with reference to the fair and sincere enforcement of this right, in any Northern State where its enforcement has been attempted, — or with the average aggregate conduct of the whole North upon the subject; he will be struck with astonishment, in proportion as he gets a complete idea of what the border slave States have suffered, and of the demoralized condition of opinion at the North on the whole subject, and of the utter wickedness of the organized robbery which has been systematically carried on. Mark — the Constitution of the nation expressly requires the rendition of slaves when they escape. Then observe, that along the border common to Ohio and Kentucky, slaves have been systematically enticed from their owners, by organized societies in Ohio, and carried off by arrangements so extensive, so complete, and so effectual, that along the entire border between those States, two or three counties deep, slavery is totally insecure in Kentucky. Along the frontier of

all the other border slave States, a similar system of organized plunder has been in active operation. To what extent the system penetrates the interior regions of the slave States, it is difficult to say; but it is known that emissaries from the North have systematically pervaded the entire South, in every imaginable disguise, schoolmaster, pedler, agent, quack, preacher, labourer — every thing — making known to the slaves the routes and methods of escape, and instilling into their minds principles that result in house-burning, poisoning, murder, and rape, if escape is impossible. What success has attended these diabolical proceedings, with regard to the whole number of slaves stolen, we have no better means of knowing than the published statement of journals that advocate the robbery: and after allowing for much boasting on their part, prompted by very obvious reasons, the number can hardly be set lower than a yearly average of ten thousand slaves — worth little short of ten millions of dollars — for some years past. Nor must it be forgotten, that although large sums of money are contributed by fanatics throughout the North, to the yearly support of these operations, yet the immediate agents of the work make it very profitable. We, and many hundred persons, have personal knowledge of a case which occurred a few years ago in Kentucky, in which between fifty and sixty negro men were attempted to be run off at one time, from Lexington and the surrounding region; in which the fee of the white organizer and leader of the company varied, according to the success of the negroes in stealing, from twenty-five to one hundred and fifty dollars, each. In that case the party was surprised when near the Ohio River, and the slaves recovered; and the white man is now in the Kentucky Penitentiary — instead of being lynched, as he would have been any where but in one of the finest communities in the world. Now let it be further observed, that this state of horrible perfidy, though notorious at the North, instead of awaking the universal horror of the community, finds the fundamental principles which underlie it, gradually penetrating in all directions; widely influential journals advocating them; supporters of them sitting in many State Legislatures, and in both Houses of Congress; political parties impregnated with them; the laws of many States changed so as to give them

security; the current literature deeply imbued with them; and to crown all, the ministers of religion, to the extent almost of whole sects and denominations, making them the chief themes of their instruction from the pulpit. We do not enumerate the election of Mr. Lincoln as the climax, and final triumph of these principles: on the contrary, it is clear to us that his nomination for the Presidency is to be accounted evidence of a réaction against them: and we know of little in the modern history of parties, braver, or more manly, than his unflinching and reiterated declarations, that the South is entitled to an effective law for the rendition of fugitive slaves, and to its effective execution.

5. That is precisely what the whole South demands. Planted on the Constitution — loyal to it and to the country — the evidence of the wrongs she has endured written on the whole face of society North and South, Mr. Lincoln himself has long ago spoken the brave and true word; the South is entitled to an effective law, and to its effective execution, whereby these outrages shall be put down forever. The time to discuss the propriety of putting such a clause in the Federal Constitution, terminated seventy years ago. The time to plead conscientious scruples for breach of faith founded on the alleged immorality of property in slaves, will come after it is shown that a nation can exist — much less that a free people can tranquilly sustain a common government, for the sake of enabling one half to plunder and degrade the other half. One of the worst symptoms of the case is manifested in the indirect manner in which many Northern States have endeavoured to defeat the execution of public law by unfriendly legislation, directed in some instances against their own citizens, in some against citizens of the South, and in some against both; and in, not only an apparent popular approval of such laws, and the most stolid indifference to the matter on the part of those who did not approve them, but even in their careful and well-considered defense by some of the ablest and best men in the North, as being without serious objection in principle. That is, all the people in Massachusetts being both citizens of that State and citizens of the United States, and there being nobody there to act in either capacity, except those who must act in both; what follows under this new political morality, and what is attempted under the pre-

text of religious scruples is — that the people of Massachusetts as citizens of the United States acknowledge the obligation resting on them under the Federal Constitution for the rendition of fugitive slaves in Massachusetts ; and at the same moment as citizens of the State, they pass laws refusing the use of their prisons and making it criminal for their officers or even their citizens to assist, and contrive remedies whereby the owner who seeks to recover his slave may be arrested as a trespasser, or even imprisoned as a felon. It is an exceedingly palpable instance, on a large scale, of what resources were possessed by those fortunate and unscrupulous gentlemen of a past age, who were princes and bishops at the same time. In point of morals, such prettexts are simply scandalous. In private life, no man who resorts to them can be held to be a gentleman — or in pecuniary transactions, can be considered honest. In public life, such attempts are chargeable with the folly and wickedness of begetting conflicts of civil and political duties in mere wantonness — or with being, as we have before shown they are, the organized results of that seditious spirit of anarchy which is destroying our country, and which a better public sentiment must crush wherever it exists, before society can be safe in any part of it. The people of the free States, wherever and in so far as they have been seduced into such legislation, owe to public morality, to their own character, and to their highest interests, not less than to their constitutional obligations as citizens of the United States, and the mutual relations of the States to each other under our noble institutions ; to erase at once all State enactments that cast obloquy on their own national obligations, or look towards the dishonor or the obstruction of the just and unquestionable claims of others upon them. And we rejoice with all our heart at the indication in so many portions of the North, that what is right will be promptly done in this matter ; and by this means, one of the steps indispensable to the permanent maintainance of our institutions be firmly taken, and the friends of the Union every where, but especially in the South, have a noble vindication of their resolute confidence that the nation was still sound at heart.

6. The other point of the two which the whole nation perceives to be fundamental, relates to the equality of the States in the

Union, and especially as that bears upon the question of slavery in the Federal Territories, as we have already stated. The great idea of all our institutions, though complex, is perfectly clear. We constitute one nation, whose people, however, are divided into many sovereign States. We have no nation but as we have these States; and we have no States but as they make this nation; and our people are citizens both of the nation and of some particular State—and strictly speaking, to be one involves the other. The fundamental principle of our liberty is the sovereignty, not of governments, but of society itself—the people; and the deepest foundation of this sovereignty of the people, is their right to change, to order, and to interpret, their political and civil institutions, by voting; to do this as separate States where the matter relates *exclusively* to the particular State—to do it in concert where it relates to the nation. In the exercise of this sovereign power the people of this nation have made all their constitutions—the very oldest of which now existing is the Federal Constitution. And the broad distinction between that Constitution made for the nation, which by its nature and its terms is supreme over all in its proper sphere, and the Constitutions made for the States respectively, is simply this; that by the former no powers are conferred on the General Government created by it except such as are expressly enumerated and such as are incidental and necessary thereto; and that by the latter all powers residing in society are conferred on the State Governments created by them, except such as are expressly withheld by Bills of Right, or some similar device. We do not mean that these results are inherent and inevitable; but we mean that these are the facts—the great and wise things actually accomplished by our ancestors. In the balancing of the powers of the Federal and State Governments, and in defining and ordering their mutual spheres and extent, lies that wide debatable ground over which statesmen have fought their battles, and organized parties. Amongst these battles none have been more hotly fought, or more perilous to the country, than the one which has been waged over this question of Slavery in the Federal Territories. What we propose, is not to enter into a history of these difficulties—nor to discuss the soundness of any of the conflicting interpretations of the Constitution, upon which the extreme claims

of hostile parties or sections rest; but to accept the actual and notorious posture of the whole affair — and having pointed out, in the nature of our system of government, the ground and the character of the real difficulty, to state the principles on which alone, as it appears to us, the integrity of the Union between slave States and free States can be preserved.

7. There are three possible results to the matter, namely: all the Territories may become free States, or all may become slave States, or some may become one, and some may become the other. No one who has a grain of common sense, can suppose it to be possible for either of the first two results to occur, by any peaceful means, or that the general government can throw its influence systematically in favour of either of them, without breaking up the confederacy — or that extensive combinations of States on either side to secure either result, can terminate otherwise than in war. It follows, therefore, that the practical enforcement of the dogma on which Mr. Lincoln comes into power, namely, that there shall be no more slavery in the Territories, is impossible otherwise than by means of the dissolution of the Union, and the subsequent conquest of one portion of the country by the other. But Mr. Lincoln and his party, if they are insane enough to push their dogma to that terrible issue, will — to say nothing of their other perils — probably find themselves arrested, as soon as they show that they are in earnest, by a counter revolution at the North, which will crush the diabolical conspiracy. Admitting that the Congress of the United States has absolute power over the National Territories — and admitting that the Northern States had the permanent control of both Houses of Congress; we have not the least idea, that a congress and a national administration in this, or any other free country, would encounter the peril, and heap on themselves the degradation of attempting to rob numerous States and many millions of people, all subject to the same government, and all portions of the same nation with themselves, of their total share in an imperial inheritance. Such ideas may be made effectual in the organization of parties, and may assume prominence in popular movements; but when it becomes necessary to give them legal form and validity, to enforce them at the point of the bayonet, to risk counter-revolution in support of them, to

establish them upon the ruins of society, and cover either the triumph or the failure of the attempt with the detestation of mankind, their evasion, in some way or other, is one of those uncontrollable necessities of responsible power, before which human passions bow in reverent awe. In like manner, the opposite extreme opinion and claim, is in its nature equally incapable of being realized. Admitting it to be true, that by the Constitution of the United States, every Federal Territory is dedicated to slavery, until on becoming a State, the people abolish it by a sovereign act; and admitting that the Supreme Court has the power to establish, beyond reversal, this sense of the Constitution, and that it has done so in a case regularly before it, and demanding for its decision the settlement of this point; still the practical enforcement of the thing, is both morally and politically impossible. We have not the least idea, that a congress composed exclusively of Southern men, could be gathered by popular election, that would entertain a proposition to rob free States weaker than themselves, of their share of a common inheritance, upon any plea that can be imagined; we do not believe the majority of any slave State would enforce such a proposition; we do not believe that any Southern gentleman would execute such a scheme. Moreover, the political impossibility is complete; and in the actual state of the country as presented by the relative number and power of the free and slave States, and as exhibited by the state of opinion everywhere — the notion of establishing slavery in all the national Territories as of constitutional right, has about the same practical value as the notion of securing all those Territories for slavery, by secession. Now, let it be borne in mind, that we have taken these claims and the demands on the one side and the other, as being founded on truths that are undeniable, and rights that are unquestionable; and have pointed out the impossibility of any just, practical, or peaceful result, in the direction indicated on either side. How immeasurably is that conclusion strengthened, when it is considered that there is not a truth asserted, a principle laid down, or a claim advanced on either side, that is not vehemently repudiated by about half the population of the nation! Well may we assert the complete impossibility both of excluding slavery from all the Territories, and of establishing it in them all; and de-

nounce the wickedness of all parties who persist in such endeavors. Those Territories, if the nation survives, must necessarily be, and ought to be, partly slave and partly free. Political necessity demands it, public justice requires it, all true statesmanship points to that result, the undisturbed force of events would terminate in that issue, and all attempts to prevent it are founded in considerations forbidden alike by wisdom, by equity, and by patriotism; and will end in crime, and misery, and dishonour, precisely in the degree that they are successful. If the country shall be destroyed, the chief importance of the questions on which our ruin is brought about, will afterwards be, that all men may see how scandalous were the pretexts upon which the noblest product of human civilization was made desolate.

8. The national domain not embraced by the boundaries of any existing State, amounts to one and a half, or two millions of square miles; an area much greater than that covered by all the States lying between the Atlantic Ocean and the Mississippi River; not much less, perhaps, than the area covered by all the present States. That the people of the larger and more numerous free States should combine to exclude the people of the weaker and less numerous slave States, from the enjoyment of the whole of this immense inheritance, is an outrage so preposterous, that one is the less astonished that it should react in a counter combination to establish slavery in the whole of it; and while the pretext of conscientious scruples for seizing all was the natural, because the only one, however ignoble, which the strong could use—the counter resort of the weaker party was also natural, and the only one they could make but war, namely, extreme constitutional right, countenanced by their construction of a political judgment of the Supreme Court. In effect, as there are but three possible solutions of the case, as has just been shown, so there are but three possible methods in which the case can be solved. One is by an equitable partition of the common inheritance, founded on the mutual recognition by the parties of the undeniable fact that it is a common property: a second is, for the owners of the inheritance to determine to fight out their opposite claims in each particular Territory—somewhat after the manner of the Kansas affair: the third is, to dissolve the Union, and fight out the opposing claims

afterwards, leaving the Territories like every thing else, in a state of anarchy, useless to either party. It is indeed conceivable that after dissolving the Union, men might recover their senses, and be capable, as alien enemies to each other, of acting with a degree of mutual forbearance and justice, which if practiced when they were united by the most sacred bonds, would have kept them friends forever. The probability of such a miracle, every one will determine for himself; as well as the probability that the future inhabitants of the vast region thrown away by the nation in its disgraceful paroxysms, will put faith enough in such miracles to respect any partition of them amongst the fragments of a disbanded confederacy. It is in vain that we would evade the sacred duties which press us, and from whose performance there is no escape that does not at the same moment brand us with infamy, and hurry us towards destruction. There is but one possible result that is just and right — and there is but one possible way of reaching that result that is either sure, fair, or peaceful: but that result, and that way of reaching it, are perfectly obvious — and when once recognized and pursued, they remove whatever difficulty the fair and complete execution of the duty to restore fugitive slaves leaves to be removed. It is upon these two points, as we have tried in all fairness to show, that the nation is bound and obliged to set herself right — that the *people* are required to make their majestic voice audible above the clamor of factions, and that all good men are called of God, by word and by deed, to rebuke on every side the phrenzy of the hour.

9. The particular mode in which this recognition of the common right of all the States in the national Territories, should be made; and the particular way and extent to which practical efficacy shall, at the moment, be given to that recognition; do not appear to us to be matters of very high importance in themselves, or matters which it is necessary that we should discuss here. An effectual law, and its effectual execution, concerning the rendition of fugitive slaves; a sincere recognition of the common right of all the States in the national domain, and the mutual abandonment by the North and the South of all claim and attempt to make all the Territories either free or slave: it is upon these points that a good understanding, will settle all the rest — and that a refusal to

come to such an understanding, will throw upon those so acting the whole responsibility of all that may follow. The foregone conclusions of political parties, and the previous committals of public men, are utterly insignificant in any true appreciation of the interests now at stake. The propounding of particular theories, or of special lines of policy, or of lists of propositions, or any thing of the sort — by State Legislatures, by resolutions in Congress, by Conventions of the people, or in any other way — where the design or the effect is to embarrass or to obstruct the indispensable settlement, is either a great weakness, or a covert attempt to prevent any settlement. The demand of either party to have a division of the Territories that is grossly unequal, is that far unjust, and a manifestation of the same spirit of claiming all, which has already wrought so much mischief. And with a million or two of square miles of national domain, not yet embraced in any State, with a country large enough to contain fifty or a hundred times its present population — and with instant difficulties which have already produced the most terrible calamities, and whose early settlement may be indispensable to the prevention of universal revolution; the purpose to make that settlement depend upon an explicit agreement concerning the disposition we will hereafter make of foreign states, which we may possibly conquer or purchase at some future day; can be considered nothing else than a purpose of preventing the possibility of any settlement. Beyond all doubt, if the free States consider that the main use of our Constitutional Union and our continued national existence, is the extinction of negro slavery on this continent; or if the slave States consider that the chief value of those incalculable advantages, lies in the use of them for the indefinite extension of slavery; the knell of our destiny is struck — and our glory, our felicity, and our triumph are as a tale that has been told.

V. 1. We have said, on a previous page, that the revolution in the seceding States would not stop where it now is, and that the course it would hereafter take, depended upon causes in some degree appreciable now; of which causes we enumerated those which appeared to us most important in the production of such results as would restore those States to their former position in the nation. Amongst them, the conduct of the Federal government towards

the seceding States — according as it might be firm and yet temperate, or as it might be vacillating and timid, was enumerated as a decided element of the future. No one can doubt that this is true, or fail to experience great anxiety on the subject. We feel no disposition to speak confidently about proceedings of the general government not yet adequately explained; nor, under any circumstances, to judge the President harshly. We consider Mr. Buchanan to be situated just in that manner, that if he saves his country, posterity will forgive him much, and place his name high on the roll of history; but that if, either by his own fault, or by the fatal temper of the times, his administration is made the term of his country's grand career, he must be classed with the greatest victims of misfortune. Few have presided at obsequies that ought to have been so illustrious — and that threaten to be so ignominious. Apparently the sport of a Cabinet divided into factions, of which one was irresolute, another neither loyal to him nor to the country, and the isolated members without authority; the use made of the national administration seems to have been to promote the interest of the leaders of sedition; until the President found himself with no alternative but to sacrifice alike his official duty and his personal honour, or at a most perilous moment, to reconstruct his Cabinet on the basis of one or two faithful and able men, the remnant of his old advisers. There may be some ground for difference of opinion as to the probable result, if the same conduct had been pursued by the administration from the beginning, as has been since the reconstruction of the Cabinet. Nothing short of complete success, rendered only more difficult by his own previous conduct, can now avert from the President, the stern condemnation of posterity. And the secession party, prompt, diligent, and sagacious, after securing from Mr. Buchanan the utterance of such opinions, and the acquiescence in such proceedings, as rendered their first organized movements safe from interruption; and after treating all national rights that stood in the way of their subsequent movements as mere nullities, and all national property in their reach as lawful plunder; are now diligently engaged in propagating the sentiment, that all attempts of the nation even to expire with decency, much less to defend its dignity, its honour, its authority,

its military posts, or its property, should be esteemed outrages on sovereign States — and be condemned as acts of useless folly that can lead only to bloodshed; seeing that the premeditated work is done, and all composition is impossible. At the same critical moment, a signal change manifests itself in the bosom of the party in the North, which resists all fair settlement, and yet dreads popular revolution there. As long as threats of violence were particularly empty and insulting, they were hurled at the South. Now, when their disloyal hopes point in another direction, the method they take to avert the coming reaction which may save the country, is to unite in vehement protests against what they are pleased to designate as *coercion*. If the nation, first deluded and then disgraced, can be paralyzed — and the whole South driven into secession — the extreme party at the North, and the extreme party at the South, each gains its special ends; and the mass of the people every where, and especially in the great Central States, may, at their leisure, wake to the reality of a situation fatal and detestable to them — which it would have been far easier for them to have prevented, than it will be to correct. In short, it is to deter the national government from every act which can even tend to restore the supremacy of the Constitution, and the integrity of the nation, that the cry against what they call coercion, is substituted for the cry against what they called oppression, in the first stages of the revolt.

2. It is deplorable, in every stage and act of this sad drama, how an almost preternatural ingenuity of error has trifled with the noblest impulses of the people, and with the simplest truths which support all our institutions. Let the dominant party in South Carolina start with the political falsehood, that the people of that State are not citizens of the United States, except through the constitution and government of that State; and let the National Administration start with the corresponding political falsehood, that the supreme law of the land cannot be enforced towards the people of South Carolina, contrary to the wishes and acts of this dominant party; and let both parties concur in the additional political falsehood, that the ruin of society is better than the risk of collision with any body in enforcing the laws: then, of course, nullification, secession, sedition, revolution, anarchy —

are inevitable products of the organization of society, and public order, and regulated liberty, and the security of property and life become more and more impossible as the organization of society becomes more and more perfect. We pointed out, on a previous page — when exposing the perfidy of the pretext resorted to in justifying the conduct of dominant parties in some of the free States, touching the rendition of fugitive slaves — the simple and obvious refutation, founded in the double citizenship of the people of the United States; and here the refutation is just as clear, and is founded on the same truth. By the express terms, as well as by the very nature of the Federal Constitution, a secession ordinance in the South is as totally void as a personal liberty law in the North possibly can be. The Federal Government has no more need to deal with the South Carolina convention, in executing the post office laws, the revenue laws, or any other laws — than it has to deal with the Massachusetts Legislature in executing the fugitive slave law; and there was no more legal necessity, nor any more logical consistency, in diatribes about lack of power *to coerce a State*, in one case than the other. There was no need, nor any power, *to coerce a State*, in either case; but in both cases the need was urgent, and the power was complete, to execute the Laws of the United States upon *every citizen of the United States*, whatever relation he might happen to occupy towards any one of the States; and to enforce those laws against all wrong doers. Nor is there any consideration arising out of the nature or the form of the opposition, that may be made to the execution of the supreme law, which can go farther than to address itself to the sound discretion of the national government, in the way of determining the most proper and effectual, and at the same time the least arbitrary, perilous, and destructive method of overcoming the resistance that is made. If the President, in the exercise of this discretion, allows millions of dollars worth of national property in buildings, in cash, in munitions of war, to be seized and held by citizens of the United States in avowed revolt against the general government; if he permits them to take forcible possession of the national fortresses, and hold them in armed hostility to the nation; if he permits the officers and soldiers of the army of the United States, to be taken prisoners of

war, and treated by hostile commanders as captured enemies; if he permits armies to be organized, munitions of war to be collected, batteries to be directed against the national fortresses; if he permits the flag of the nation to be torn down from the public edifices and fortresses, and hostile flags to be planted on them—nay, permits that proud emblem of our national unity and force to be fired on with impunity, when it covers an armed force of the nation; if he allows the mail to be broken open and the correspondence of the government itself to be tampered with; the foreign commerce of the country to be interrupted and the revenue from it seized; the internal commerce to be menaced by batteries erected under State authority on our great water courses; if, to add no more, he permits ambassadors from secession conventions and assemblies to menace him with war in the capital of the nation, and conspirators plotting the military occupation of the Federal City, to go unpunished: it really appears to us that the most nervous secessionist might consider the question of coercion, as being about as offensive to the President as to himself. Every man who has any remaining loyalty to the nation, or any hope or desire for the restoration of the seceding States to the confederacy; must see that what is meant by the outcry against coercion is in the interest of secession, and that what is meant is in effect, that the Federal government must be terrified or seduced into complete coöperation with the revolution, which it was its most binding duty to have used all its power and influence to prevent.

3. We believe it is the desire of the American people that the present revolution should be brought to such a conclusion that the seceding States shall all be restored to their position in the nation; and that to this end such a settlement of existing difficulties shall be made, as will effectually and peacefully secure this result. In order to that, it is impossible for the nation to permit anything to be done by the general government, which will take for granted that the state of exaggerated and disloyal opinion either in the extreme North or the extreme South, is irrevocably fixed as a final and sovereign expression. On the contrary, what the nation must take for granted, as the basis of every hope of peaceful success. is that a revolution in opinion must take place in both

quarters, in view of the imminent peril of our position. But beyond all doubt, every thing that can strengthen the hands of the party now dominant, either at the extreme North or the extreme South—must weaken every hope of any revolution in opinion—every hope of a solution at once peaceful and successful. Nothing could be so fatal as the conviction in the mind of loyal citizens, both in the extreme North and the extreme South, that the nation does not sympathise with them, and will abandon them. It is, therefore, sheer folly to weaken the posture of the general government towards the secession movement. The duties of that government, are perfectly clear as to their nature—no matter how difficult they may be as to the mode of their performance. The nation has no alternative, for the moment, but to abide the firm and sincere performance of those duties,—meantime striving for a settlement of the whole difficulty. If the seceding States follow up their past outrages by rushing into war with the nation, no matter on what pretext, that will only prove that the pestilence has already gone beyond the reach of peaceful remedies. On the other hand, let it be taken for granted that the nation cannot be saved—and that a peaceful separation, if that be possible, is the best hope of all parties. Even in that case, and with a view to that result, the position of the general government towards the seceding States should be one of forbearance and moderation indeed, but of unalterable firmness. The nation has an interest in the manner of this supposed separation, hardly inferior to its interest in preventing any separation: nor is the interest of the States that may go out, less permanent and fundamental in the right ordering of that great, and as we think terrible result, than any they may suppose they have in founding a new empire. That this particular constitutional government should fail, is dreadful enough; but we owe it to ourselves, to the glorious cause of constitutional government, and indeed to the human race, that we should not establish by our downfall the imbecility of republican freedom; but, on the contrary, that the very wreck of our institutions should exhibit the principles of constitutional liberty—in contrast with every aspect of anarchy—and in all their unalterable force and beauty. Let our ruin be the thousandth proof of the violence of human passions, and the instability of human

hopes: let it not be a damning evidence against constitutional government. To us nothing appears more certain, than that looking to either result, the nation has no necessity more imperative, as means to any endurable result, than that the Federal Government — instead of shrinking from its true position on the one hand, or resorting to needless violence on the other — should accept its true mission as the representative of the nation, and so to a great extent master of the situation, and pilot the ark in which such transcendent treasures are embarked, courageously amidst the howling waters. God will bring it to the right haven: for the prayers of many hundreds of thousands of his children — lie yet unanswered before his face.

4. It is from a single point of view that we have conducted this exposition, and it is unto one single result, that we have directed it. The point of view is that of one steadily beholding the imminent and deadly peril of his country—nay, its ruin, already in some degree accomplished, and hastening to be complete; and the single result developed, is the salvation of the country — the *whole* country. Many topics have, therefore, been passed in silence, which, from any other point of view, or in expounding any other result, would have required careful treatment; and many other topics eminently pertinent here, have been omitted, because we have already discussed them on a recent occasion.* It is of the last importance, that we should not be deceived by appearances, or misled either by our hopes or our terrors. The voice that can alone silence the storm that is raging around us — the hand that is alone competent to grasp and to crush every element of disorder — that voice has not yet spoken, that hand has not yet put forth its strength: it is the voice and the hand of this *great nation*. It is time for it to speak — time for it to act. If we may dare to trust all the lessons of the past, it will be true to itself — true to every one who is faithful to it. In that case we are safe; though we may suffer much and long before the end is reached. Our civili-

* See "*Discourse of DR. ROBERT J. BRECKENRIDGE. Delivered at Lexington, Ky., January 4th, 1861; on the Day of National Humiliation.*" It has been widely published in the Newspapers, both secular and religious, and in pamphlet form by *Hull & Brother*, Louisville, Ky.; *Faran & McLean*, Cincinnati, Ohio; *Woods*, Baltimore, Md.; and perhaps in other places by other persons.

zation, in its present form, is the growth of nearly a century — the growth of two centuries and a half on this continent — the growth of all preceding ages in the old world, before its best inhabitants came hither, to construct society afresh out of all the treasures of the past. The gigantic oaks of the forest are not planted more deeply — the everlasting mountains have not a surer foundation — than our American Civilization. Let the nation stir itself as a giant, waking from his slumber. Let the voice of God be heard amongst us, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder. Let us not hold our peace, — let us not rest, till the peril is overpassed, that we should be termed Forsaken and our land be termed Desolate — nor till our country be as a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and as a royal diadem in the hand of our God!

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“STATE OF THE COUNTRY.”

BY THE

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I. Civil War. Influence upon it, of the Idea of the Restoration of the Union.

The American people are in the midst of civil war. That calamity which, in the just and almost universal judgment of mankind, is the direst which can befall nations, has already covered our country with its terrible shadow; and the gloom thickens from day to day, portending a conflict as frightful as it is repulsive — whose issues are, in many respects, hardly less uncertain than they may be vast. Hundreds of thousands of armed

men are hastening to slay each other—led by captains many of whom are worthy to command heroes, and provided with every means of mutual destruction which the science and skill of the age can devise. Hundreds of millions of dollars have already been expended in these immense and fatal preparations: and so thoroughly is the most warlike of all races aroused, and so completely are the exigencies of the times held to demand of every man a complete readiness to defend all that he is not willing to surrender, that, at whatever cost, every one capable of bearing arms will be armed, and will use his arms with deadly effect, according as the course of events may seduce or oblige him to do so. It is, indeed, possible that some wonderful interposition of God, or some sudden and heroic impulse falling upon the people, may even yet avert the terrible catastrophe, and arrest the destruction even as it is ready to descend. It is equally possible that, before these lines are printed, great armies which already face each other, may have fought one of those bloody and decisive battles, whose issues determine the fate not only of wars, but of ages. Ignorant of all the future, and imperfectly informed concerning passing events, it becomes us to speak with moderation and candor of the prospects before us. Penetrated with the deepest sorrow at the mournful, though it be in many respects sublime, scene which our country presents, we would forbear to speak at all, if it were not that the general tenor of what we purpose to utter, is designed to keep alive in the hearts of our countrymen the conviction that the whole country may, even yet, be restored; and to influence, so far as anything we can do may influence, the conduct of all these terrible affairs, to that end, and by that idea. It is this which is the burden of all we have hitherto said and done—it is this which justifies nearly any effort, any sacrifice, any suffering, on the part of the nation—it is this which we must keep before the minds of men if we would preserve our countrymen from turning savages, under the influence of the civil war upon which we have entered, and for the prosecution of which such enormous preparations are made by both parties.

II. The long and terrible reign of Parties. Majestic Reappearance of the Nation on the scene of Affairs. Great Truths accepted, and to be maintained.

1. For a long course of years political parties, sectional factions, and the clamor of demagogues, had given that sort of political education to the people, and occupied the thoughts of men with that description of political ideas and desires, that *the nation — the mighty American Nation* — had disappeared from the area of our general politics. It had been for a whole generation Whig, and Democrat, and Republican, and Know-Nothing, and Secessionist, and Abolitionist, and Fire-Eater; the people rent, and confused, and maddened — fraud and violence reigning in the heated canvasses and elections — and the most shameless corruption spreading like a pestilence amongst public men. The glorious Nation had disappeared utterly, as the controlling element in national affairs; — so utterly, that a President of the United States was found capable of conniving — whether through timidity, through folly, through imbecility, or through corruption let posterity decide — at the ruin of the nationality which his Government represented, and the overthrow of the Constitution by virtue of which it existed. So utterly, that a revolt openly conducted in flagrant contempt of the President, the Constitution, and the nation, and attended in all its stages by innumerable acts of war — was allowed to spread from State to State, without the slightest attempt of the nation, or any one representing it, to make itself felt or even heard; until the vast extent of the revolt, and the great number of States on which the partizans of it had seized, became the chief embarrassment in dealing with it at all, and the main plea with timid statesmen why the degraded nation should accept its own destruction, as a fact fully accomplished.

2. *That mighty Nation has reappeared once more on the theatre of affairs.* All thoughtful men knew that such a destruction as was attempted, could not be accomplished by war on one side, without begetting war on the other side. It may be considered madness in the Confederate Government to have preferred the bombardment of Fort Sumter, to its peaceable surrender in three days, through starvation. But it was a choice precisely in the spirit of every act towards the American nation and its Govern-

ment, which had characterized the whole previous course of the revolt, and which has marked the whole treatment extended to Union men in every seceding State, to the present moment. It was possible to have divided the American nation *peaceably*, into two or more nations, by the consent of the American people, and the change of the Federal Constitution. But it was not, in the nature of things, possible to rend it by a military revolt, characterised by a spirit of contemptuous and reckless violence, alike illegal, unjust, and fatal, without arousing the outraged nation, and bringing all the mighty questions at issue, to that arbitrament of arms which the secessionists had chosen — and by which, in one form or another of violence, they have achieved every conquest they have made. We are not partizans of the present National Administration, and have no adequate means of forming an opinion, as to whether the particular occasion and moment — or whether earlier, or whether later, occasions and times — were best suited for armed resistance by it, to the progress of the great military revolt, whose avowed objects were the destruction of the Government, the overthrow of the Constitution, and the ruin of the nation. What we wish to signalize is the majestic reëpppearance of the American Nation in the mighty scene — the simultaneous perishing of all factions, and disappearance of all parties but the party of the nation, and the party of secession — and the unanimous conviction of all American citizens loyal to their country, that the National Government is the true and only lawful representative of the nation itself. With almost absolute unanimity the twenty millions of people in the nineteen Northern States; the great majority of the four millions of white persons in the five Border Slave States; and, as we firmly believe, a very large portion of the four millions of white people in the remaining ten Slave States, though now cruelly oppressed and silenced, cordially recognize these great truths, and will maintain them — namely, that the American people are a nation — that the Constitution and laws of the United States are supreme in this nation — that the Federal Government is the true and only legal representative of this nation, charged with the defence of its safety, the execution of its laws, and the protection of its liberties — in the execution of which duties it is bound to repel force by force.

Nothing can give greater intensity to the facts and principles to which the foregoing statements relate, than a comparison of what has occurred in all the States which have seceded, with what has occurred in all those which have not seceded — touching the means by which the revolutionists have gained the mastery and silenced opposition in the former, and the manner in which the nation has spontaneously roused itself in its own defence in the latter.

III. Duty of the Nation to loyal citizens in the seceded States. Their subjection to a Reign of Terror. Alleged unanimity in the seceded States.

1. Next in importance to the clear apprehension of the duty, which every loyal citizen of the nation owes to the National Government, in this most painful crisis — concerning which we have just endeavored to disclose the enthusiastic conviction of the nation itself; is an equally clear apprehension of the duty which the nation owes to loyal citizens in those States in which the revolutionary party has gained the ascendancy, or in which that party may hereafter gain it. This latter question, as far as we know, seems not, as yet, to have been fully considered or determined by the General Government. The secession party seems to have decided it at once, and according to its violent instincts; and not only does their unanimous judgment demand of them exile, death, or conversion — but their legal authorities are reputed to be prompt, and their ubiquitous committees of vigilance very vehement in the execution of a code — nearly as simple and efficacious as that of Mahomet himself. There is much reason to believe that the actual majority of votes was cast against the secessionists in several States upon which they have seized; that in several others held by them, such a majority would have been cast, if an opportunity had been allowed; that in not one of those States has there been a true and fair popular ratification of secession; that before the actual commencement of armed resistance on a large scale by the Federal Government, the actual majority of the people in the Confederate States, taken as a body, was hostile to secession; and that, undeniably, a certain number, and that considerable, of loyal citizens, are in every one of those States. Allowing that a state of things even tolerably near to that contained in the foregoing statement exists — nothing seems to us more clear than that the

American people, and by consequence the Federal Government, are bound to put forth their utmost strength for the protection of American citizens situated as persons loyal to the Union are believed to be, in every State that has seceded. Questions of property, questions of rights of various kinds, questions of profit and advantage — may be compromised or even gracefully surrendered on many occasions. But no Government — no people — no gentleman — no Christian, can withdraw protection and support from those who are bound to them by the most sacred and tender mutual ties, and leave them to be degraded, oppressed, and persecuted — without atrocious iniquity and boundless degradation. It seems to us that it would be transparently clear, even if nine-tenths of the people in every one of the Confederate States, were decided secessionists — that they should be required to treat the loyal citizens of the United States, found casually amongst them, much more those resident amongst them upon the sudden outbreak of revolt, with justice and humanity. If, however, it is really true that the secessionists are the minority in many of those States, upon which they have seized by superior organization, and the suddenness and violence of their proceedings; then, undoubtedly, the duty of the nation is as obvious to deliver those States from such a despotism, as it would be if their oppressors were foreign invaders. In like manner, it is the duty of the General Government to furnish all the munitions of war to its loyal citizens residing in States where it is necessary for them to defend, by arms, their loyalty to the Union, against armed conspiracies seeking to force them into secession.

2. Peaceable revolutions are made by voting; and the fundamental principle of republican government — which the nation is bound by the Constitution to guarantee to every State — is that the majority of those entitled to vote — and not an armed faction — represents the sovereignty. It would be curious to compare the universal contempt for popular rights and institutions, and for all the principles and usages of American freedom, which has so conspicuously distinguished the career of this secession revolution — since the aristocratic minority has got possession of power; with the theory of “Concurrent Majorities,” so carefully elaborated by their first Apostle, Mr. Calhoun, for the special protec-

tion of the rights of minorities in free governments. Widely different from the principle of Mr. Calhoun's theory, is that now reduced to practice in the seceded States, by getting together a certain number of persons called a "Convention"—in whom the sovereignty of the people is supposed to reside in a permanent and manageable form; bodies which in the revolted States have been converted into secret, permanent, and irresponsible engines, first of revolution, and then of despotism. We do not speak of the suppression of such desperate substitutes for republican government; nor will we stop to point out how fatally such proceedings reveal the anarchy from which they take their rise, and the military despotism in the future to which they unerringly point. What we have to urge is, the solemn duty of the nation to protect loyal minorities, much more loyal majorities, against the ferocious proceedings already made manifest under the workings of these institutions; and to warn those yet free from their pitiless grasp, to prepare for slavery before they rush into the power of such rulers.

3. Nor is it out of place to remind those who clamor incessantly about the unanimity of the South, and the folly and wickedness of attempting to resist the settled purpose of a whole people who have resolved to leave a Union which they detest; that the nation does not believe in either the alleged "unanimity," or the proclaimed "fixed purpose." Doubtless it is true, that the peculiar notions of exclusive loyalty to the State we live in, which prevail extensively in the Southern States—have caused many loyal people to submit to the despotism which forced them into secession; and State pride, affection for our native land, and many other considerations, have swelled the ranks of the army of the secessionists, since war on a large scale, and imminent peril to their cause, suddenly and most unexpectedly met them in their violent career. But the American people, in this great crisis of their destiny, have solemn duties to perform—and have a right to be satisfied that they are truly informed, before they take steps which they may never be able to retrace. The American people fervently desire the entire restoration of the Union, with the entire consent of all the secession States. And they firmly believe that result—attended by the total overthrow of the secession faction—would

immediately succeed a reëction in the South, not the tenth part as great as that which has just occurred in the North — not greater, indeed, than the one, in an opposite direction, which has occurred throughout the South, within half a year. It is, just now, a question of testimony first, and then of duty founded thereon;— a question, not between the South and the North; but between a nation of some twenty-six or seven millions, and an active faction, possibly under one million, in revolt against it.

IV. The Seceded *States* may return to the Union, or the Secession *Party* may maintain their Revolt by Arms. The War one of Self-Preservation, on the Part of the Nation. Not aggressive and against the South—but defensive and against Secessionists. Supposing the Triumph of the Secessionists; insuperable Difficulties. Every benefit contemplated by Secession, defeated by the War into which it plunged. Restoration to the Union the true Result.

1. We have already said that the issues of this unnatural war, are in many respects as uncertain as they will probably be vast. Contingently, however, the most immediate and direct issue of it, can have but one, of two results. Either the seceded States must return to their loyalty to the nation, and their position as members of the United States of America; or the secession party must be able to vindicate by arms the course upon which they have entered, and, maintaining the independence of as many of the States as may finally adhere to them, those States must be acknowledged by the American people and Government as a separate nation. Of course, there can be no such result as the conquest of the seceded States, and the holding them as Provinces or Territories, by the Federal Government. Such an attempt is not to be thought of as possible—nor to be entertained, for a moment, even if it were possible, as a permanent policy—but, beyond all this, even if it were politic and easy, it would be even more abhorrent, if possible, than secession itself, to the feelings of the American people, and the principles of American liberty. Which of these issues will be realized depends, apparently, on the event of the war: concerning which we will add something presently, seeing the probabilities of that event ought to be a very weighty consideration with both parties to it. In the meantime let it be observed, that the mere statement of the case makes it manifest that the war entered upon by the nation, not as one of aggression and con-

quest, but one of self-defence and self-preservation, can be conducted only as war upon the secession party and Government—and not as war against the people of the South; a war, therefore, which would end of itself, upon the overthrow of the secession party, and the suppression of the Confederate Government erected by that party.

2. Upon the happening of such an event, which certainly is possible, perhaps highly probable, the allegation is that no people—no South—would remain to reconstruct society and government, and restore the seceded States to their place in the Union. We have already spoken of the want of faith in all such extravagant statements; an incredulity fortified by the whole career of the revolt, both in its method of usurping power, and its method of producing unanimity afterwards; to which must be added the undeniable proofs existing in public acts and records, in popular movements and votes, in numberless private communications, in the persecutions lavishly inflicted upon thousands of persons, and in the seductions habitually employed against every doubtful, and the menaces against every loyal, citizen. What is now passing in Tennessee and Virginia, while we write, is full of significance as to what might be expected if the army of the secessionists were driven out of those States. What happened, months ago, in various Southern States in which that party succeeded in establishing their despotism—and what has recently happened in Maryland, Missouri, and Kentucky, where their desperate efforts failed—is conclusive as to the great fact, that the mass of the community every where needed only to have been wisely and bravely led, to have conquered what seems to have been, almost every where that it existed, a faction of the minority. What made it powerful, was its long previous training—its activity and daring at a moment of great popular discontent, mortification, and alarm—and the fatal connivance of Mr. Buchanan, rendered decisive by the active coöperation with the revolt, of those members of his Cabinet whose positions had given them special opportunities to promote its organization and its first acts. It had, originally, no element of a national movement—it has now no aspect of a national revolution. And, in our judgment, the moment it encounters signal defeat, a counter revolution will set in, that will strip it of all that did not

belong to it in its first stages; and under just and wise treatment, will eventually restore to the Union every seceded State, not excepting South Carolina itself. For ourselves, and we believe in this we utter the sentiments of the whole nation, we desire for the people in the States now held in armed opposition to the National Government, nothing worse than their complete deliverance from the iron despotism of a disloyal and frantic party, and their speedy and complete restoration, in perfect equality and renewed fraternity, to all the glory of our common nationality, and all the blessings of our true and regulated freedom.

3. Supposing we are mistaken in the essential conditions by which the foregoing result is to be obtained, there remains only the alternative of the triumph of the revolt over the nation, and the permanent independence of the seceded States. We do not propose to discuss, at this time, the consequences of such a division of the nation—but only to look calmly at some of the most obvious difficulties of its accomplishment. And in the very front of all these, is the question of the ability of the secession party, either to obtain from the consent of the nation, the concession of the independence of the Confederate States, or its ability to wrest it from the nation by arms. The question of that consent is a question of peace, not of war; a question which the secession party disdained even to discuss before they flew to arms; a question which will, hereafter, depend essentially upon the state of the country, and the wishes of the States now under the dominion of that party, after the war is ended. The great principle on which the consent of the nation could, in any circumstances be given, is precisely opposite to the great principle on which this revolt proceeds—namely, veneration for popular rights and the popular will. What view the people of the South may take of their rights, and what may be their will touching their erection into a separate nation—are questions which may be very greatly affected by the progress of events—and the decision of which, by themselves, may be very various, according as they are in circumstances which allow them to vote and act freely, or, which oblige them to vote and act under a ubiquitous military despotism, administered by armed revolutionary committees of vigilance. What is passing now in Virginia and Tennessee—what has passed

in every State that has already seceded — what was attempted in Maryland, Kentucky, and Missouri — would not, in all probability, be taken — by a great nation loyal to popular rights, and full of veneration for free institutions — for such an expression of the popular desire and will, on the part of great numbers of its citizens, as would challenge its consent to its own dismemberment. It is not to be disguised, however, that even under the most favorable aspect in which the subject of the peaceable division of the nation could be presented, there are obstacles in the way of its accomplishment which nothing but the highest and noblest convictions of mutual obligations, united with the profoundest sense of mutual forbearance, accommodation, and good will — could surmount. In the present state of the country, it is superfluous to discuss these obstacles. And in the degree that independence, by whatever means, as the only alternative to restoration to the Union, is environed with difficulties; is the madness of the secession movement manifest, and the duty of the nation to suppress it clear.

4. It seems to remain, then, that the solitary result of the war, is the restoration of the seceded States to the Union, or the triumph of the arms of the secessionists over the nation. The more completely this great truth is fixed in the minds of all parties, the better for all. The more thoroughly the nation understands that it is fighting neither for vengeance nor for conquest, but directly for self-preservation — and remotely for the maintenance of its independence in the face of all other nations, and for its future peace, security, and advancement in the glorious career now threatened to be cut short; the more it will be disposed to prosecute the war forced upon it, in the manner which becomes such a people, driven into such a conflict. And the more completely those who are in arms against the nation realize, that what they seek is, probably, not attainable; and the more clearly the States and people now seduced or terrified into a revolt so unnatural, understand that the suppression of that revolt means, not their degradation, but their restoration to all that was won by the valor, and confirmed by the wisdom of their ancestors; the more certain will be the cure of their present frenzy — the more rapid their deliverance from the delusions under which they have erred ex-

ceedingly — and the more thorough their overthrow of the faction now leading them to destruction.

5. To all human appearance, the establishment of the independence of the Confederate States by the present war, is impossible. How much blood may be shed, how much treasure may be squandered, how much suffering may be inflicted, how much ruin, in ten thousand ways, may be brought upon millions of people, and how near to the brink of destruction the country may be brought — can now be known only to the Ruler of the Universe. But so far as any object avowed, or even conceivable, which ever was, or can be, proposed as a benefit to the Southern States, was expected to be promoted by secession; this war renders that object unattainable. We do not propose to enter into discussions from a military point of view, nor do we underrate the difficulties of every kind, which the General Government has to encounter. But it seems to us perfectly inevitable, that without the special interposition of God for the destruction of this great nation, the certainty is complete — that the independence of the Confederate States cannot be established as the result of this war. In the degree that this judgment may be supposed to be just, two conclusions, both of them of great weight, follow. The first is, the wickedness and folly not only of the revolt itself, but of the whole spirit and method in which it has been prosecuted; the second is the certainty that the fact itself, in proportion as it becomes manifest, must weaken, throughout the whole South, the purpose to prosecute a conflict so ruinous and so bootless. No doubt there are wars which may be prosecuted to the last extremity; and, no doubt, many thousands of secessionists may have persuaded themselves that this is such a war, or may have so deeply wrecked all other hopes that only this desperate stake is left to them. But the dictates of reason and morality — the judgment of mankind — and the irreversible decree of posterity, is different here. This is a revolt, whose complete success would not have justified the war into which it has plunged a great country; and, therefore, the certainty of its failure robs its continuance of all pretext. And such, at no distant period, may be expected to be the judgment of the great mass of the Southern people; and, by consequence, their peaceful and cordial return to their loyalty, and to

the exercise of all their rights as citizens of the United States — instead of being a preposterous dream — is not only the most probable, but apparently the certain result, of a wise and courageous treatment of affairs.

V. Miscalculations of Secession. Miscarriage as to a "United South." And as to a "Divided North." And as to the temper, and purpose of the Nation. And as to Expansion, the Slave trade, Free trade, Boundless Prosperity, Cotton Monopoly. Secession a frightful and incalculable mistake.

1. If we consider for a moment the signal miscarriage of all the permanent objects of the secessionists, and the strange miscalculations, and absurd pretensions upon which their hopes of ultimate success rested; it will diminish, on one hand, all distrust of the grounds on which their hopes of establishing their independence by terrifying the nation into consent, or conquering it by arms, have been shown to be futile; and will augment, on the other hand, the just confidence of the nation that it is master of the situation; and augment, also, the confidence with which every man in the South, whether loyal or disloyal, ought to contemplate the disastrous end of this revolt, as inevitable. To succeed in establishing, by force, the independence of the South — using that word in its large sense, as embracing all the Slave States — necessarily involved, as the very first condition, the unanimity of the whole South in the movement. Instead of this, such a line of conduct was adopted, as made the action of every Southern State isolated; and this policy was pursued in such a manner, as to make a resort to violence necessary in securing unanimity in any State — and as to make the principles of despotism supplant the principles of freedom, in every State. The seeds of utter defeat were thickly sown in the first open movement of the conspiracy. To-day, instead of a completely united, there is a thoroughly divided South. And we feel perfectly satisfied, that if every arm was removed from the fifteen Slave States, and every man in them all was allowed freely to choose his side — and then the whole population was equally and completely armed, and the question fought out; the result would be the suppression of the revolt. Born of Southern parents, in a Southern State — never having owed or professed allegiance to any other government than that of the United States, and that

of the Commonwealth of Kentucky—never having even resided, during a life far from short, except temporarily and for brief periods, out of the South—and having been obliged by our course of life to acquire a large acquaintance with the people, the institutions, and the interests of the South; the opinion we have expressed may be fairly weighed against a large amount of clamor. It would, we are convinced, be vouched as true and sound, on the conditions stated, by more than half a million of Southern men—ready upon fair occasion, and if need required, to uphold it with their lives.

2. Again, the second imperative necessity, preliminary to any flagrant proceedings by force, was the absolute certainty that the pretensions of the South would be supported, at least by opinion, in the twenty States of the North, in such a way as to divide and weaken all concerted movements, designed to precipitate the overwhelming force of twenty millions of people, upon eight millions—if the whole South was united—with four millions of slaves scattered amongst them; concerning the freedom or the servitude of which slaves, the revolutionists professed that the chief cause of the war lay. Instead of that, the unanimity of the North proved, from the start, to be complete, and its enthusiasm so great, that a brief proclamation of the President, after the bombardment at Charleston, called three or four hundred thousand volunteers to the standard of the nation; a single State, (Ohio) offering more men than were demanded for the whole nation. With these two facts, nothing can be more obvious, than the utter incompetency or the desperate recklessness, of those who precipitated their followers into a conflict as unequal as it was wicked—and did this with boastings and revilings as unseemly as they were unfounded.

3. Again, no delusion was ever more complete than that into which the leaders of the secession party fell and slept, during their long conspiracy of thirty years, of the true character, and actual position and temper of the American people, and of the force of the power they had themselves accumulated, and the value of the preparation they had made for the setting of a great nation at defiance. They had talked treason so long together, that they seemed to consider it a power of

itself, and all patriotism extinct. The national treasury made bankrupt, the small army put totally out of reach, and the arms of the nation diligently stored where they could be seized — the little navy laid up, or scattered in different seas — the unhappy President deluded, seduced, or terrified — and a secret band of sworn allies made up of desperate adventurers, disloyal soldiers, and corrupt politicians scattered over the nation; these, as far as the public are yet informed, seem to have been the original implements which were deemed adequate for the first start of a military revolution, whose object was the dismemberment of one of the greatest of existing nations of the most warlike people, with the finest and firmest nationality in the world. Their subsequent success — founded upon a temporary phrenzy in the public mind, and upon the military ardor of the Southern people, their devotion to their domestic institutions, and their personal and State pride — may be allowed to redeem, in some degree, the miscalculated force of the conspiracy, from utter contempt. It is not, however, to the force or foresight of the conspiracy, but it is to the disordered and perilous state of the country, itself due to causes which we have developed in publications hitherto recently made; that the great political and military movements throughout the larger portion of the South, subsequent to the inauguration of Mr. Lincoln, are to be attributed. These movements — in many points of view most deplorable, in many others illustrative of noble traits of character of the Southern people, and which have given to the secession cause most of its strength and all its dignity — even if they could have been foreseen as one element of the future, are the farthest possible from excusing the revolt. For great as they may be, and unworthy as the cause of secession may be of them — their inadequacy to achieve the objects proposed by the war, is none the less certain; an inadequacy founded in the nature of things, and which wise leaders would have foreseen, and generous leaders would not have sacrificed.

4. When we turn our thoughts towards topics more remote than those hitherto considered, they all appear to conspire to the same result — the entire defeat of every permanent object proposed to be gained by the secession war. If the whole of the

Slave States were united, as the result of this war, in a separate Confederacy—all the ideas of the future expansion of the new nation, which have occupied so large a space in the thoughts of men, might be surrendered at once. One year would not elapse, in all probability, before an alliance of all nations interested in the vast and increasing commerce which must pass across the isthmus of Panama, and amongst the islands of the Caribbean sea, and across the waters of the Gulf of Mexico; would effectually close the question of expansion, for the Confederate States. In like manner, the question of the Slave Trade, to the free prosecution of which so much importance continues to be attached, in the most earnest of the seceded States; may be considered definitively at an end, let this revolt terminate as it may. In like manner, the doctrine of Free Trade, in favor of which the doctrine of secession took its rise in South Carolina, and which has been continually and conspicuously held forth as one of the priceless blessings to be secured by the revolt; is utterly subverted by one of the earliest acts of the Confederate Congress, imposing a duty on exports—a form of obstructing commerce forbidden by the Federal Constitution. And the boasted career of incalculable wealth which secession promised to inaugurate—in the first year of its existence is signalized by the charity of the people of Illinois sending corn free of charge, to the starving poor of Mississippi; while, if the war shall continue till the Confederate States conquer the United States, their first year of peace will exhibit the heaviest ratable public debt, perhaps, in the world, and the most burdensome taxation ever borne by an agricultural people; and a bankruptcy as absolute as the golden dreams of secession were preposterous. To make but one suggestion more, it would, perhaps, have been impossible for any madness less destructive than this secession war, to have seriously disturbed for a century to come, the near approach which the South was making to the most productive and extensive monopoly, ever possessed by any people in the products of the earth—in its growing control of the cotton market of the world. At present, so imminent is the peril into which this boundless source of wealth has been brought, not only for a few seasons, but it may be in permanence—that the armed intervention of the great mari-

time and manufacturing nations of the world, for the deliverance and protection of the cotton of the Confederate States, is amongst the desperate hopes to which their situation gives expression.

5. Now it does appear to us, that these statements reveal principles and facts of supreme significance, all pointing in the same direction, and challenging profound consideration. They appear to prove, that secession, in its origin, its progress, its present condition, and its terrible future — is a blunder, a failure, a frightful and incalculable mistake, founded upon every sort of error and miscalculation. It is in that view of them, and of their teachings, that we have arrayed them. Allowing whatever may be thought necessary for our mistake, for our want of full knowledge, even for our supposed prejudice or want of candor, enough remains to indicate, what we have so earnestly insisted on, that the complete restoration of the Union, is not only a glorious event within our reach — which it is the highest duty and interest, both of the nation and of the seceded States, to accept and act upon; but that the ordinary course of the immense and terrible affairs now passing before our eyes, leads, though it may be through frightful sufferings, towards that result. Would to God, it might have been in peace, and by reason and love, that the country had been saved! Thanks be to God, for a refuge to all parties, such as seems to us to be set before them all, when these calamities are overpassed! For the blood that is shed, and the crimes that are committed — let them who are responsible answer to God!

VI. The Border Slave States. State of parties in 1860. Sudden and secret Revolution in Virginia. Probable effects, political and military. Western Virginia. Central mountain Route to the central South. Delaware, Maryland, Missouri. The original States — the States carved out of them — the purchased States. Kentucky, her position, peril, temper, purpose.

1. At the start, this secession movement was exclusively confined to the disciples of Mr. Calhoun — and they, having their chief seat in South Carolina, and schools rather than parties in the upper Slave States, did not hold the controlling power even in 1860, in one half of the Cotton States. By degrees, the Democratic party of the South had become imbued, under the abused name of "State Rights," with the doctrines of free trade, of the

increase and extension of slavery, and of secession : and the disruption of that party at Charleston and Baltimore, as far as the public are now informed, was in the interest of these new ideas, and of those old disciples of Mr. Calhoun. The parties, in the fifteen Slave States, which supported Mr. Bell and Mr. Douglass for the Presidency in 1860, could, if they had united, have carried nearly all those States — and, for the time, have put down secession. If the Whig Convention, at Baltimore, had nominated Gen. Houston, instead of Mr. Bell, this result would probably have followed. It is, in effect, the want of ability, or the want of patriotism, in the leaders of parties in the Slave States in 1860, to which a very large part of the present danger of the nation is to be attributed. In the mean time, the Democratic party had already, before 1860, acquired the predominance in all the Slave States, and when the secession party took up arms against the National Government, the political and military power of all those States was in the hands of that party. The election of Mr. Lincoln, which produced such a shock throughout the Slave States, afforded the opportunity of creating a powerful agitation, upon the extreme pro-slavery aspect of secession ; and it was used with so little scruple and so great diligence, that to be loyal to the Union, and to be an abolitionist, have come to mean the same thing in the vocabulary of secessionists ; and organized political fanatics and ruffians, wherever they are not repressed by the fear of effectual resistance, have, under that pretext, initiated a reign of terror. The common predominance of the Democratic party, and the universal existence of the institution of slavery in all those States, were the bonds of union amongst them all, whereby those who meditated revolt expected and sought to carry them all for secession : the latter fact affording the secessionists the most powerful means of inflaming the passions of men, and the former fact providing the power to coerce such as could not be seduced. So far as the five Border Slave States were concerned, of which we have now to speak particularly, (Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, Kentucky and Missouri) the presidential election of 1860 broke the back of this scheme, by breaking, in those five States, the power of the party which supported Major Breckinridge for the Presidency. The other part of the scheme of the

secessionists, encountered, in those five States, obstacles which proved to be extremely serious. In the first place, the loyalty of the people was far more stubborn than had been expected, and the peril of attempting to coerce them into disloyalty far more grave than had been encountered elsewhere. In the second place, the institution of slavery, in those States, stood in a position, and the people occupied toward it a relation, widely different from the corresponding facts in the Cotton States; and the people, satisfied with the matter as it stood, saw nothing but peril in the remedy offered by secession. In the third place, the geographical position of those States gave them immense weight while peace could be maintained, and made them the theatre of the war, which every one could see the secessionists were making inevitable; so that every consideration of wisdom, patriotism and self-respect, admonished them to maintain, inviolably, their position as citizens of the United States.

2. Such, briefly, was the nature of the situation, generally considered, in the five Border Slave States; which contain more white inhabitants, and military resources, than the remaining ten Slave States. If these five States had stood firm, the fate of secession was sealed. The war must have been short, as the speedy and complete restoration of the Union certain. The sudden, secret, and deplorable revolution created in Virginia by a Convention, pledged to the great majority of the people who had elected them, and expressly bound, by the law which created the body, to take a widely different course; necessarily changed, in many respects, the posture of events, and the nature and course of the war. It cannot, in our judgment, as we have shown, change the final result. It will inflict incalculable injury upon Virginia herself—and must, so far as she is concerned, end in the division of the commonwealth, or in radical changes in the nature of her government, and in her internal policy. As we understand the matter, the popular representation rests on a mixed and arbitrary basis of land, slaves, and voters, distributing representation by great sections of the State, and then by counties, and towns perhaps, in those sections respectively; the general result being, that the great central section of the State is unequally represented as compared with the eastern section, and the still greater western

section still more unequally as compared with both the others. The government, thus permanently thrown into the hands of a minority of the people occupying the eastern and southern sections of the State, has been long considered disregarding of the ordinary rights and interests of the subject majority, occupying the western and northern sections of the State. A permanent and flagrant instance of this chronic injustice, is an unequal system of taxation, so framed as to relieve the immense aggregate wealth, in the form of slaves, held by the ruling minority, in large part from any tax at all, and as to the remainder, from a large part of the property tax, by fixing a low and arbitrary value on slaves, by act of Assembly. Another instance of the same sort is alleged to exist, in the systematic injustice with which the revenue thus fraudulently raised, is spent entirely in the interest of the same ruling minority, with complete disregard of the special interests of the heavily taxed majority. The Convention which voted, in secret session, the ordinance of secession, with a mob of secession ruffians, as is alleged, clamoring at their reluctant obedience to its behests; passed, also, and submitted with that ordinance, to the people for ratification, an act proposing to concede something concerning this slave taxation. Even this concession, wrung by the necessity of the occasion — was characteristic of the ruling spirit; the great revolution, though submitted to the idle form of a popular vote, under the eyes of fifty thousand armed secessionists — being made effectual and executed at once, as if already approved by the people; the little act of concession, being made ineffectual, till ratified by the popular vote. This statement, necessary to the full understanding of the case between Eastern and Western Virginia, makes it all the more probable that the movement in the latter against secession, and against the dominant minority in the former, will have consequences at once permanent and important; all bearing directly against the efficacy of the revolutionary action of Eastern Virginia, and of the late Convention.

3. Not the least important of the consequences involved in the state of affairs we have been disclosing, is that a perfectly practicable military route is thus opened through the heart of the most loyal population of the whole South, into the very heart of

the inland secession country ; whereby the General Government may lead an army for the protection of loyal citizens in the back parts of Georgia and both the Carolinas on the left hand, in Northern Mississippi and Alabama in front, and in West Tennessee on the right. The mountain region which covers Western Virginia and Eastern Kentucky and Tennessee, penetrates into Georgia, Alabama, and North and South Carolina. Two hundred miles wide from east to west, and double as long from north to south, the long valleys of this remarkable region, flanked everywhere by mountain ranges, run precisely in the direction that an army for protection of loyal citizens of the South should take. A march of ten or fifteen days from the Ohio river, through Western Virginia, would place a force in the mountains of East Tennessee, cutting the line of the railroad which connects the Atlantic ocean with the Mississippi river at Memphis. The effects of such a forward movement, invited by the conduct of Virginia, and indicated by the highest military and political considerations — would be immediate and decisive, if sustained by an adequate force, under an able commander. And our persecuted brethren in East Tennessee, Northern Alabama, and the back parts of Georgia and the Carolinas, may see — in the hints that we have ventured to throw out — that they are not out of the reach of succor. We believe that ten thousand volunteers from the mountains of Kentucky, would follow ROBERT ANDERSON in such an expedition, for such an object ; and it may be confidently added, ten thousand more from Western Virginia, and ten thousand who would join them in East Tennessee. No portion of America had less motive to betray herself than Virginia had ; none could ever put more at stake, by one act of, what seems to us, suicidal folly, than she has done. Renowned and venerated name ! — well do we know that many of your heroic sons will die for you, on the mere point of honor, even though they blush at what you have done ! They will die in vain ; neither maintaining what you have decreed, nor wiping out its stain !

4. The posture of Delaware and Maryland may be considered definitively settled, and, as to the result, essentially the same, in many respects ; and that of Missouri is so analogous to that of Maryland, that we need not separate it from them, in the few

remarks it is necessary to make. Delaware casts in her lot, with a prompt movement and a loyal heart, with the nation of which she is so small but so true a part. The relation of Delaware to Maryland is geographically such, that it seems a great marvel that both of them should, in times like these, apparently overlook the great mutual importance of their forming the closest bonds with each other. Maryland looked to Virginia for guidance—when she and Delaware united were really more important to the Federal Government, than Virginia was; and far more entitled, in the circumstances, to give the lead than to follow Virginia. Her great peril before the late revolt in Baltimore, was her want of preparation, watchfulness, and self-reliance; which, but for the wise, forbearing, and firm conduct of the General Government, would have cost her dear. Her great peril now is, from the seductions of Virginia, and the machinations of her own disloyal sons. As to her destiny—no discussion can make it any plainer than it is already, to every one who will reflect upon her whole position. As long as the Federal Government exists, and Washington is the capital of the American nation, Maryland is an indispensable portion of that nation; and as such, has before her a boundless career of prosperity, freedom, and honor. In her, disloyalty to the nation is not only wickedness—it is folly. The same general state of case, though for reasons in some respects different, exists with regard to Missouri. If the country west of Missouri is to remain a portion of the nation, it is impossible for the nation to allow that State to separate from it. If the South is to become a separate nation, it is equally impossible for the United States to give up the military position—one of the strongest in the world—covered by the mouths of the Ohio and Missouri rivers. The position of Missouri is central, and unspeakably powerful and important, as a member of the Federal Union; and there is no degree of wealth, power, and influence, to which she may not attain, if the Union is maintained. So that her own interest, in every conceivable way, points to the same great career, which the absolute necessities of the nation will secure for her, if she continues loyal to it. To us, we admit, this whole affair of secession has been an enigma, in this—that all the reasons and pretexts, alleged as a justification, or even an excuse

for the course which the revolt has taken, have appeared to us so totally disproportioned to the conduct they professed to explain; that we have felt as if there must be other grounds, as yet concealed from the public, upon which men of sense and honor pursued a line of conduct, apparently so monstrous, as compared with all the known defences of it. We regret to say that the secessionists in Missouri, and we must add, though perhaps in a less degree, in Maryland, appear to be signally amenable to this charge, whether we consider what it was they attempted—or the means which they resorted to—or the manner in which they quailed, when it became necessary to assume the responsibility of what they had done—or the machinations they have kept up, since their conspiracy in both those States was defeated. It is clear to us that the million and a half, or upwards, of white inhabitants, in Delaware, Maryland, and Missouri, must be counted out—whenever the strength of secession is summed up. And we will now proceed to show that the million in Kentucky must also be deducted.

5. There are very high senses in which all the States are equal, both in fact, and in the contemplation of the Federal Constitution. Nevertheless, there are circumstances connected with the past history, and indeed with the origin, of all the States, that seem to place them in positions by no means identical—touching the “State Rights,” and the corresponding “National Rights,” which enter so largely into the difficulties produced by secession. We have, in a former publication, attempted to show that a National Government and State Governments united into one political system, is the original, continuous, exclusive, and perpetual form of government chosen by the American people since ever they were a nation, and by all the commonwealths composing that nation since ever they were States; and we have attempted, after establishing this controlling truth, to show its bearing upon secession, in various points of view. What we have to say now is, that at the bar of reason and conscience, there is a difference touching the rights claimed, as to secession, between the original thirteen States, and the twenty-one States added since; and that there is a difference, again, between those out of these twenty-one added States, which were acquired by conquest, treaty, or purchase,

and those which were created out of portions of the first thirteen States. The plea of Virginia or North Carolina, for example, might have a certain aspect entitling it to grave consideration; while the plea, for example, of Louisiana, Texas, and Florida, might provoke only derision; while the plea, for example, of Tennessee to have the benefit of the Repeal Ordinance of her mother North Carolina, might appear to be nearer, in equity, to the first than to the second of the two other classes. Our judgment is against the validity of the very highest of these pleas; and the lowest of them seem to us monstrous, in every point of view. Considering the past history of the case of Louisiana, for example, her recent conduct, so far from being founded in justice, is even destitute of a decent regard for appearances.

6. The position of Kentucky, the only remaining Border Slave State, is historically at the head of the class of new States carved out of old ones. From her birth as the first State added, nearly seventy years ago, to the original thirteen, her whole career has been marked by the noble qualities of Virginia, at that period, and before, and long after, and which shone, with peculiar luster, in the founders of the young commonwealth. And we confidently predict, that let Virginia falter and fall, as she may, her daughter will maintain her loyalty to the good, and will reject the evil, in her example. Behold an example and a proof: Virginia asked her to meet her in counsel to *preserve* the Union; meantime, Virginia suddenly determined, before the appointed day of counsel, to *destroy* the Union. Kentucky having accepted the former counsel and invitation, went on totally regardless of the subsequent madness—elected her commissioners without opposition, and by the largest popular vote she ever gave to any proposition—and kept the appointed day. There is, in fact, but one internal peril hanging over Kentucky. The executive power of the State, and the command of her military force, is in the hands of a Governor—having yet two years to serve—who is totally out of sympathy with the great mass of the people, and who has used the influence of his office, and all its power, in a direction, and towards an end, hateful to the bulk of those whose Governor he is. If Mr. Magoffin was a loyal Union man, the whole internal difficulty of Kentucky would terminate in a

week; unless the secession minority should be mad enough to take up arms, and call in Confederate troops; in which case, of course, unless Kentucky should instantly suppress them, she would become one of the theatres of the war. That event may happen. It is believed by many to be highly probable, under present circumstances. Situated as the State is, it is a contingency which is constantly impending; and to meet which, if it should happen, there is no way but by arms. The very plainest duty of the Union men of Kentucky, therefore, for months past, has been to arm and organize themselves, to the very last man, and in the most effectual manner, and in the shortest possible time. We desire, from the bottom of our heart, that Governor Magoffin, and the party with which he acts, may be content to guide their conduct by law, and in obedience to the known will of the people of Kentucky; and that by so doing, he may keep the calamities of war from desolating the State. But if he and his party will not do this, or cannot do it—upon both of which points there is deep and wide distrust in the public mind—then he and they must take the responsibility of all that may follow. And he and they both well know, that the people of Kentucky will not submit to the despotism of the Confederate States—will not allow of a reign of terror—will not tolerate revolutionary committees—will not tamely submit to injuries, insults, oppressions, or usurpations of any kind—and will not give up their loyalty to the American nation, or their place in the American Union. The mass of the people of Kentucky sincerely desire the restoration of the entire Union; they strongly disapprove of the whole course of the secessionists from the beginning; they believe, at the same time, that the whole South has had great cause of dissatisfaction—and they do not feel free to take part in the war against the Confederate States: nor will they take part against the Federal Government, which, however they may disapprove of it, or its acts, they recognize as the representative of the nation of which they are a loyal part, and the chief executive authority under that Constitution which is the supreme law. What they desire and propose, therefore, is to take no part in this war; and by this means, they intend—in the first place, to express the true state of their feelings; in the second place, to occupy a position in

which, as a mediator, they may, as soon and as often as occasion offers, do all in their power to restore peace and Union, if that be possible; and in the third place, to preserve themselves and their State from the horrors of a conflict which they did all they could to prevent, which they cannot engage in with a good will, and which, in the divided state of opinion amongst her people, and by reason of her geographical position, would probably be ruinous to the State, by means of her becoming actively engaged in it.

7. Such we believe to be the existing state of opinion and affairs in Kentucky. With regard to it, we will make but two general remarks. The first is, that in our judgment, the state of opinion in Kentucky is chiefly characterized by the public mind being torn by conflicting principles and passions, often working even in the same mind, in opposite directions,—and, as the general result, begetting a decided popular reluctance to any violent measures, or any extreme courses, or any irrecoverable step; but that the tendency of opinion has been constant and rapid, in favor of the Union; and that, at every period, and especially at present, the number of persons who would vote to take Kentucky out of the Union, is a comparatively small portion of the people—made dangerous by their violence, their activity, their organization, their being extensively armed, their good understanding with the secession leaders and military officers, and their sympathy with the chief executive and military authorities in the Commonwealth. The second remark we have to make is, that the same wise and lofty forbearance manifested by the general Government towards Maryland, and we will add towards Missouri—will be manifested, there is every reason to believe, towards Kentucky, in the high but unusual position she has felt it to be her duty to assume. In the case of Kentucky—and we may add Missouri—this conduct of the President, which those States certainly should applaud, and which would give them peace at once, if it were imitated by the Confederate Government, is extremely significant; as it seems to indicate that, in his opinion, the neutral and yet loyal position of these two great central States, may, in certain highly probable events of the war, be turned to great advantage, in that complete restoration of the

Union, which the loyal citizens of both of those States ardently desire.

VII. General Conclusion.

There remain many topics of great importance and significance, concerning which we have said nothing. And yet the number and the magnitude of those we have attempted to elucidate, compared with the narrowness of the space they occupy, might indicate that our error may rather be in attempting too much, than in not attempting more. The whole subject is one, of which we never think seriously, without profound astonishment and anguish; about which we have never written a line without attempting to exercise the severest rectitude, as if we were speaking in the face of another generation. This civil war is a terrible portent. All civilized nations regard it with horror; and posterity will be obliged to pronounce it an inconceivable outrage upon the freedom, the morality, and the civilization of the present age. To what ends God, in his adorable Providence, has allowed it, and will conduct it, and use it—it behooves every one, who acknowledges there is a God, to ponder deeply—and every one, who professes to serve God, to search diligently.

A few great truths seem to us transparently clear—and amongst them not one is more impressive, at the present moment, than that which we have attempted to illustrate in this paper. The American Nation ought to be preserved, and the American Union ought to be restored. This war ought to be conducted by the Nation—under the impression of that solemn necessity—which, as far as we can judge, is shown to be attainable, alike by the indications of Divine Providence, and by all the circumstances upon which enlightened human judgments can be formed. If in these things we err, nothing will remain, but for the nation to bow its august head reverently before the known will of God, and the irresistible force of destiny. It has already redeemed itself from the ignominious fate to which the last Federal Administration had consigned it. Let its destruction bear some just proportion to the glory of its past life.

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DISCOURSE
OF
DR. R. J. BRECKINRIDGE,
DELIVERED ON THE DAY OF
NATIONAL HUMILIATION,
JANUARY 4, 1861,
AT LEXINGTON, KY.

It is in circumstances, my friends, of terrible solemnity, that this great nation presents herself in an attitude of humiliation before the Lord God of Hosts ; in circumstances of great solemnity, that she stands before the bar of all surrounding nations, under that universal public opinion which gives fame or stamps with infamy ; and hardly less solemn than both, is her attitude at the bar of distant ages and especially our own posterity, that awful tribunal whose decrees can be reversed only by the decree of God. It is the first of these three aspects, either passing by in silence or touching very slightly the other two, that I am to consider before you now. And what I shall chiefly attempt to show is, that our duties can never be made subordinate to our passions without involving us in ruin, and that our rights can never be set above our interests without destroying both.

In taking this direction, let us bear in mind that the proclamation of the Chief Magistrate of the Republic which calls us to this service, asserts, in the first place, that ruin is impending over our national institutions ; and asserts, in the second place, that so far as appears to him no human resources remain that are adequate to save them ; and, in the third place, that the whole nation, according to his judgment, ought

to prostrate itself before God and cry to him for deliverance. —Upon this I have to say, in the great name of God, and by the authority of Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the world, these two things: *First*, that national judgments never come except by reason of national sins; nor are they ever turned aside except upon condition of repentance for the sins which produced them: and, *Secondly*, that repentance for sin, as it is the absolute and universal, so it is the infallible condition of divine pardon and acceptance, not only in the case of individuals, but more obviously still and more immediately in the case of nations, since nations, as such, have no existence in a future life. Wherefore, if we are in the way of fearful evils, we are also in the way of clear duty, and therein we may hope for assured deliverance in the degree, first, that every one will go before another in earnest endeavors to rectify in himself all that is abominable to God; and, secondly, that every one will evince towards others the forbearance which he desires that God should extend towards him. Wherefore, also, we may boldly say that the remedy from God to us need not be expected to manifest itself by means of political parties, or by means of combinations of political leaders, or by means of new political compacts, or by means of additional legal enactments, or by means of more explicit constitutional provisions; but that it must come from God to us, and be made manifest through a profound movement in the source of all power in free governments, namely, first, in the hearts of individuals, men turning from their sins, their follies, and their madness; and, secondly, in the uprising of an irresistible impulse thus created, which over the length and breadth of the land shall array itself in the power of God, against every endeavor to bring upon us the evils which we are imploring God to avert.

The first and greatest of these evils that we beseech God to avert, and that we should strive with all our might to prevent, is the annihilation of the nation itself, by tearing it into fragments. Men may talk of rights perpetually and out-

rageously violated—they may talk of injuries that are obliged to be redressed—they may talk about guarantees without which they can submit to no further peace—and there is doubtless much that has force and much more that is captivating to ardent minds in such expositions of our sad condition. For what problem half so terrible was ever agitated upon which it was not easy to advance much on every side of it? I will not consume the short time allowed to me in examining such views. What I assert, in answer to them all is, that we have overwhelming duties and incalculable interests which dictate a special line of conduct, the chief aim of which should be the preservation of the American Union, and therein of the American nation.

To be more explicit, it seems to me that there are inestimable blessings connected with the preservation of our National Union; and that there are intolerable evils involved in its destruction. For the blessings: there is the blessing of peace amongst ourselves, there is the blessing of freedom to ourselves and to our posterity, there is the blessing of internal prosperity secured by that peace, and freedom, never before excelled, if attained, by any people; there is the blessing of national independence secured by our invincible strength, against all the powers of the earth combined; there is the blessing of our glorious example to all nations and to all ages; there is the blessing of irresistible power to do good to all peoples, and to prevent evil over the face of the whole earth: there is the blessing of an unfettered Gospel and an open Bible and a divine Saviour, more and more manifested in our whole national life as that life deepens and spreads, subduing and possessing the widest and the noblest inheritance ever given to any people, and overflowing and fructifying all peoples besides. It is the problem sought to be solved from the beginning of time, and, to say, the least, the nearest approximation made to its solution, namely, the complete possession of freedom united with irresistible national force, and all directed to the glory of God and to the good of man. And this is that glorious estate

now declared to be in fearful peril, and which we are called upon to beseech God to preserve unto us.

On the other hand, the evils of rending this nation. Which of the blessings that I have enumerated—and I have enumerated only those that appeared to me to be the most obvious—which of these is there—peace, freedom, prosperity, independence, the glory of our example, the power to do good and to prevent evil, the opportunity to give permanent efficiency all over this continent, and in a certain degree all over this earth to the Gospel of God; which of these blessings is there that may not be utterly lost to vast portions of the nation;—which of them that may not be jeopardized over this whole continent; which of them is there that may not depart forevermore from us and our posterity in the attempt to destroy our oneness as a people, and in the results of that unparalleled self-destruction? Besides all this, how obvious and how terrible are the evils over and above, which the very attempt begets, and which our after progress must necessarily make permanent if that attempt succeeds. First, we have already incurred the perils of universal bankruptcy before the first act is achieved by one of the least important of the thirty-three States. Secondly, we have already seen constitutional government both in its essence and in its form trampled under foot by the convention of that State; and all the powers of sovereignty itself, both ordinary and extraordinary, assumed by it in such a manner that life, liberty and property have no more security in South Carolina than anywhere under Heaven where absolute despotism or absolute anarchy prevails, except in the personal characters of the gentlemen who hold the power. Thirdly, we have already seen that small community preparing to treat with foreign nations, and if need be introduce foreign armies into this country: headlong in the career in which she disdains all counsel, scorns all consultation and all entreaty, and treats all ties, all recollections, all existing engagements and obligations as if her ordinance of secession had not only denationalized that

community, but had extinguished all its past existence. Fourthly, we see the glorious flag of this Union torn down and a colonial flag floating in its place; yea, we see that community thrown into paroxysms of rage, and the Cabinet at Washington thrown into confusion because in the harbor of Charleston our national flag instead of being still further dishonored, yet floats over a single tower! What then did they expect, who sent to the harbor of Charleston, to occupy the national fortress there, the son of a companion of Washington, a hero whose veins are full of revolutionary blood, and whose body is covered with honorable scars won in the service of his country? Why did they send that Kentucky hero there if they did not intend the place they put into his hands to be kept, to the last extremity? But I need not enlarge upon this terrible aspect of what is coming to us all if the Union is destroyed. These are but the beginnings of sorrows. The men and the parties who initiate the reign of lawless passion, rarely escape destruction amid the storms they create, but are unable to control. Law comes from the depth of eternity, and in its sublime sway is the *nexus* of the universe. Institutions *grow*; they are not *made*. Desolated empires are never restored. All history furnishes no such example. If we desire to perish, all we have to do is to leap into this vortex of disunion. If we have any just conception of the solemnity of this day, let us beseech God that our country shall not be torn to pieces; and under the power of these solemnities let us quit ourselves like men in order to avert that most horrible of all national calamities.

Let us consider, in the next place, those rights, as they are called, by means of which, and in their extreme exercise, all the calamities that threaten us are to be brought upon us at any moment: nay, are to be so brought upon us that our destruction shall be perfectly regular, perfectly legal, perfectly constitutional! In which case a system like ours—a system the most enduring of all others, whether we consider the history of the past or the laws which enter into its composition—a

system the hardest of all others to be deranged, and the easiest of all to be readjusted when deranged; such a system is alleged to have a secret in it, designed expressly to kill it, at the option of the smallest fragment of it. I allude to the claim of the right of Nullification and the claim of the right of Secession as being Constitutional rights; and I desire to explain myself briefly in regard to them.

According to my comprehension there is a thorough and fundamental difference between the two. The power of Nullification, supposing it to exist, would be an extreme right within the Union, and is necessarily temporary in its effect, and promptly tends to the termination of the difficulty upon which it arises. And this settlement may occur by the action of our complex system of government in various ways. It may be in the way of some compromise of existing difficulties; or in the way of repeal, by one party or the other, or in the modification of the obnoxious laws; or in the way of some judicial decision settling the difficulty; or—which is the true remedy—instead of Nullification, by an appeal to the people at the polls, who are the source of all power in free governments, and by obedience to their decisions when rendered—by voting, instead of fighting; or, at the worst, by an appeal to arms; but even in that case the result necessarily secures the continuance of the pre-existing system of government on the restoration of peace; let that peace be by victory on which side you please. The doctrine of Nullification stands related to the doctrine of State Rights—precisely as the doctrine of consolidation stands related to the old federal doctrine of a strong central Government. In both cases, the theory of a great party has been pushed to a logical absurdity, which subverted our political system. That the will of the greater part should prevail—and that the smaller parts should have the power of appeal to this will, at the polls—and in judgment upon every principle of civil and political liberty—was the ultimate form in which this great doctrine entered into the political creed of that old Republican party which

came into power with Mr. Jefferson in 1801, and was expounded as they held it in those famous resolutions of Kentucky and Virginia in the latter part of the last century. Its connection with the whole theory of every mixed political system, is not only absolute but is vital. More especially is it so with our complex system. It has been carried, as it stands connected with the constitutional, and much more with the reserved rights of the States, to an extreme on that side, opposite to the extreme of Consolidation. But even in its extremest form it bears no proportion in mischief to the doctrine of Secession. Considered in its true and original form, I judge it to be indispensable to the preservation of our political system; and that the opposite mode of interpreting our political duties, and rights and remedies, terminates in subjugating the States to the General Government, and in subjugating both the General Government and the exposition of every political principle to the Supreme Court of the United States. The former system is natural and permanent—the latter is absurd and invites rebellion. This great phenomenon has occurred in this country, that, by reason of the extraordinary ability of some of the advocates of the system which passed away in 1801, it has assumed a new form and a new life in general opinion; and seconded by the peculiar constitution of the Supreme Court of the United States, the old Republican or Democratic notions upon this great subject, though constantly triumphant in the country, have been constantly disallowed in the interpretations of that court. I judge that the doctrine of Secession is an extreme reaction against this Federal interpretation of the relations of the States to each other and to the nation. For when you arrive at an interpretation which is final and hateful to immense parties and interests; and there is no remedy but arms, secession or absolute submission; the expression of the popular will against the interpretation you have made, brings society to a condition that in an excitable race and amongst a free people can hardly be expected to be safe

or easy to be managed. You have therefore this perilous and extraordinary claim of the right of secession under this extreme reaction; differing absolutely from the idea of the old States Rights' party, and differing absolutely even from nullification itself.

Secession is a proceeding which begins by tearing to pieces the whole fabric of government, both social and political. It begins by rendering all redress of all possible evils utterly impossible under the system that exists, for its very object is to destroy its existence. It begins by provoking war, and rendering its occurrence apparently inevitable, and its termination well-nigh impossible. Its very design is not to reform the administration of existing laws, not to obtain their repeal or modification, but to annihilate the institutions of the country, and to make many nations out of one. If it is the constitutional right of any State to do this, then we have no National Government, and never had any. Then, also, it is perfectly idle to speak of new Constitutions, since the new Constitutions can have no more force than the Constitution already despised and disobeyed. Then, also, the possibility is ended—ended in the very theory of the case, and illustrated in the utter failure of its practice—of uniting republican freedom with national strength in any country, or under any form of government. But according to my belief, and according to the universal belief of the American people but a little while ago, no such right, legal or constitutional, as that of secession, does or can exist under any form of government, and least of all under such institutions as ours.

And, first of all, no State in this Union ever had any sovereignty at all independent of and except as they were *United States*. When they speak of recovering their sovereignty, when they speak of returning to their condition as sovereigns in which they were before they were members of the confederacy, called at first the United Colonies, and then the United States, they speak of a thing that is historically without any foundation. They were not States; they were

colonies of the British, the Spanish, the French, and the Dutch governments; they were colonies granted by royal charters to particular individuals, or particular companies. Pennsylvania was the estate, the property of William Penn; Georgia, the larger part, perhaps the whole of it, of General Oglethorpe. They were settled under charters to individuals and to companies—settled as colonies of foreign kings and States by their subjects. As such they revolted; as such, before their revolt, they united in a continental government, more or less complete; as such united colonies, they pronounced that famous Declaration of Independence, which, after a heroic struggle of seven years, still as united colonies, they made good. That great Washington, who led that great war, was the commander-in-chief for and in behalf of these united colonies. As such they were born States. The treaty of peace that made them independent States, was concluded with them altogether—as United States. What sovereignty did Kentucky ever have except the sovereignty that she has as a State of these United States, born at the same moment a State of the American Union and a separate sovereign State? We were a district of Virginia. We became a State and we became one of the United States at the same moment, for the same purpose, and for good and all. What I mean by this, is to point out the fact that the complex system of government which we have in this country did always, does now, and, in the nature of the case, must contemplate these States as united into a common government, and that common government as really a part of our political system, as the particular institutions of the separate sovereignties are a part of our political system. And while, as you will observe, I have attempted, while repudiating the doctrine of nullification, to vindicate that doctrine of State Rights, which, as I firmly believe, is an integral and indispensable part of our political system; yet, on the other hand, the doctrine that we are a nation, and that we have a national government, is and always was just as truly a part of our system as the other.

And our political system always stood as much upon the basis that we are a nation, as it stood upon the basis that that nation is composed of sovereign States. They were born into both relations; so born that each State is equally and forever, by force of its very existence and the manner thereof, both a part of this American nation, and also a sovereign State of itself. The people, therefore, can no more legally throw off their national allegiance than they can legally throw off their State allegiance; nor can any State any more legally absolve the allegiance of its people to the nation, than the nation can legally absolve the allegiance due by the people to the State they live in. Either attempt, considered in any legal, in any constitutional, in any historical light, is pure madness.

Now the pretext of founding the right of secession upon the right to change or abolish the government, which is constitutionally secured to the people of the nation and the States, seems to me, and I say it with all the respect due to others, to be both immoral and absurd. Absurd, since they who claim to exercise it are, according to the very statement of the case, but an insignificant minority of those in whom the real right resides. It is a right vested by God, and recognized by our constitutions as residing in the greater part of those who are citizens under the constitution, which they change or abolish. But what, in the name of God, and all the possible and all the imaginable arrogance of South Carolina, could lead her to believe that she is the major part of all the people that profess allegiance to the Constitution of the United States? And it is immoral, because it is trifling with the sacred rights of others, with the most solemn obligations on our own part, and the most vital interests of all concerned. And it is both immoral and absurd in one, because, as a political pretext, its use in this manner invalidates and renders perilous and odious the grandest contribution of modern times to the science of government, and therein to the peace of society, the security of liberty, and the progress

of civilization; namely, the giving constitutional validity to this natural right of men to change or to abolish the government under which they live, by voting, when the major part see fit to do so. It is trifling with this great natural right, legalized in all our American constitutions, fatally caricaturing and recklessly converting it into the most terrible engine of organized legal destruction. More than that: it is impossible, in the very nature of the case, and in the very nature of government, that any such legal power, or any such constitutional right, could exist; because its existence pre-supposes law to have changed its nature; to have become mere advice; and pre-supposes government to have changed its nature, and ceasing to be a permanent ordinance of God, to become a temporary instrument of evil in the hands of factions, as they successively arise. Above all places under heaven, no such right of destruction can exist under our American constitutions, since it is they that have devised this very remedy of voting instead of fighting; they that have made this natural right a constitutional right; they that have done it for the preservation and not for the ruin of society. And it has preserved, for more than seventy years, the noblest form of human society, in constant security, and it could, if justly exercised, preserve it forever.

But let us go a little deeper still. It can not be denied that the right of self-preservation, both in men and States, is a supreme right. In private persons, it is a right regulated by law, in all communities that have laws. Among nations, there is no common supreme authority, and it must be regulated in their intercourse with each other by the discretion of each; and arms are the final appeal. In our system of government, there is ample provision made. In all disputes between any State and a foreign nation, the General Government will protect and redress the State. In disputes between two States, the Supreme Court is the constitutional arbiter. It is only in disputes that may arise between the General Government and a particular State that any serious difference

of opinion as to the remedy has manifested itself in this country; and on that subject it is the less necessary that I add any thing to what has been said when speaking of nullification, as the grounds of our existing difficulties are not between disaffected States and the General Government chiefly, if at all; but they are difficulties rather founded on opposite states of public opinion touching the institution of negro slavery, in the Northern and in the Southern States.

It may be confidently asserted that if the power of nullification, or the power of secession, or both of them, were perfectly constitutional rights, neither of them should be, under any circumstances, wantonly exercised. Nor should either of them, most especially the right of secession, ever be exercised except under extreme necessity. But if these powers, or either of them, is a mere usurpation, founded on no right whatever, then no State may resort to rebellion or revolution without, in the first place, such a necessary cause as may not be otherwise maintained; or, in the second place, without such a prospect of success as justifies the evil of rebellion or revolution, or else such intolerable evils as justify the most desperate attempts. Now it is my profound conviction that nothing has occurred, that nothing exists, which justifies that revolution which has occurred in South Carolina, and which seems to be impending in other Southern States. Beyond all doubt, nothing has occurred of this description, connected with any other interest or topic, except that of negro slavery; and connected with that, my deep assurance is, that the just and necessary cause of the slave States, may be otherwise maintained than by secession, revolution, or rebellion; nay, that it may be incomparably better maintained otherwise; nay, that it can not be maintained in that way at all, and that the attempt to do so will be fatal as regards the avowed object, and pregnant with incalculable evils besides.

In such discussions as these, the nature of the institution of slavery is perfectly immaterial. So long as the Union of the States survives, the constitutional guaranty and the fed-

eral power, which have proved adequate for more than seventy years, are that much added to whatever other force States or sections may possess to protect their rights. Nor is there, in the nature of the case, any reason why States with slaves and States without slaves, should not abide together in peace, as portions of the same great nation, as they have done from the beginning. The unhallowed passions of men; the fanaticism of the times; the mutual injuries and insults which portions of the people have inflicted on each other; the cruel use which political parties have made of unnatural and transient popular excitements; and, I must add, the unjust, offensive, and unconstitutional enactments by various State Legislatures at the North; the repeal of the Missouri Compromise by Congress; the attempt of the Supreme Court to settle political principles deemed to be of vast importance by all parties, in the Dred Scott case, which principles were not in the case at all; the subsequent conduct of the Federal Government and of the people in Kansas; the total overthrow of the Whig and American parties, the division and defeat of the Democratic party, and the triumph of the Republican party; the ordinance of secession of South Carolina; the agitation pervading the whole nation, especially the greater part of the Southern States; and to crown all, and if possible to make all desperate, the amazing conduct of the President of the United States amidst these great disorders: this is the sad outline of this slavery agitation, the posture of which for a moment is thus exhibited, no one knowing how soon new and fatal steps may hurry us still further. What I assert in the face of so much that is painful and full of peril, and what I confidently rely will be the verdict of posterity, is that all this, terrible as it is, affords no justification for the secession of any single State of the Union—none for the disruption of the American Union. They who make the attempt, will find in it no remedy for the evils from which they flee. They who goad others to this fatal step, will find that they have themselves erred exceedingly. They who have had the lead

in both acts of madness, have no hope for good from coming ages, half so great, as that they may be utterly forgotten. Posterity will receive with scorn every plea that can be made for thirty millions of free people, professing to be Christian, in extenuation of the unparalleled folly of their self-destruction, by reason that they could not deal successfully with three or four millions of African slaves, scattered amongst them. Oh! everlasting infamy, that the children of Washington did not know how to be free! Oh! degradation still deeper, that children of God did not know how to be just and to forbear with one another!

It is said, however, it is now too late.—The evil is already done. South Carolina has already gone. Florida, it is most likely went yesterday, or will go to-day, even while we are pleading with one another and with God to put a better mind in her. Soon, it may be possible within the present month, all the Cotton States will go. We, it is added, by reason of being a slave State, must also go. Our destiny, they say, our interests, our duty, our all, is bound up with theirs, and we must go together. If this be your mind, distinctly made up, then the whole services of this day are a national mockery of God; a national attempt to make our passionate impulses assume the dignity of divine suggestions, and thus seduce the Ruler of the Universe into complicity with our sins and follies, through which all our miseries are inflicted upon us. Let it be admitted that a certain number of States, and that considerable, will attempt to form a Southern Confederacy, or to form as many new sovereignties as there are seceding States. Let it be assumed that either of these results is achieved, and that either by way of peace or by war. Let all be admitted.—What then? Thirteen States by their delegates formed the present Constitution, more than seventy years ago. By the terms of the Constitution itself, it was to be enforced when any *nine* of these thirteen States adopted it—whether by convention of their people or otherwise is immaterial to the present matter. Thirteen States made the Constitution

by their delegates. A clause is inserted in it that it shall go into effect when any nine of the thirteen States adopt it, let any four refuse as they might. If they had refused what would have happened would have been, that these four States, born States, and born United States, by the Declaration of Independence, by the war of the Revolution, by the peace with Great Britain, and by the articles of confederation, would, by a common agreement among the whole thirteen, have refused to go further or to make any stronger national government; while the other nine would have gone further and made that stronger national government. But such was the desire of all parties that there should be no separation of the States at all, that the whole thirteen unanimously adopted the new Constitution, putting a clause into it that it should not go into effect unless a majority so great as nine to four would sign it. I say if a minority of States had not adopted the new Constitution, it would have occurred, that they would have passed by common consent into a new condition, and for the first time have become separate sovereign States. As you well know, none of them refused permanently. What I make this statement for, is to show that, taking that principle as just and permanent, as clearly laid down in the Constitution, it requires at least eleven States out of the existing thirty-three States to destroy, or affect in the slightest degree, the question as to whether or not the remaining States are the United States of America, under the same Constitution. Twenty-two States, according to that principle, left after eleven had seceded, would be as really the United States of America under that Federal Constitution, as they were before, according to the fundamental principle involved in the original mode of giving validity to the Constitution. Kentucky would still be as really one of these United States of America, as she was at first when, as a district of Virginia, who was one of the nine adopting States, she became, as such district, a part thereof. And by consequence, a secession of less than eleven States, can in no event, and upon no hypothesis, even so much as embarrass Ken-

tucky in determining for herself, what her duty, her honor, and her safety require her to do.

This fact is so perfectly obvious, that I presume if the six New England States were to revolt, and to establish a new confederacy, there is not a man in the State of Kentucky who would be led thereby to suppose, that our relations with the Union and the Constitution were in the slightest degree affected; or that we were on that account under the slightest obligation to revolt also. It may sound harsh, but I am very much inclined to think that there are many thousands of men in Kentucky who might be apt to suppose that the secession of the New England States would be a capital reason why nobody else should secede. It is the principle however, which I am attempting to explain.

The answer to this view, I am aware is, that we are a slave State, and that our relations are therefore necessarily different with respect to other slave States, as compared with the free States, or with the nation at large. The reply to which is various: First. The Institution of Slavery, as it exists in this country, presents a threefold, and very distinct aspect. First, the aspect of it in those States whose great staples are rice, sugar and cotton, commonly and well enough expressed by calling them the Cotton States. Then the aspect of it presented by those States in portions of which these staples are raised, and in other portions of which they are not; which we may well enough call the mixed portion of the slave States. And then its aspect in those slave States which are not producers of those great staples, in the midst of which, and out of which these great commotions come. What I assert is, that the relation of slavery to the community, and the relation of the community by reason of slavery to the General Government and the world, is widely different in all three of these classes of States. The relation of slavery to the community, to the government and to our future, in Missouri, in Kentucky, in Virginia, in Maryland, in Delaware, is evidently different from the relation of slavery in all these respects in Louisiana,

in South Carolina and in all the other Cotton States. In the meantime also, the relation is different from both of those, wherein it exists in what I have called the mixed States; in Arkansas, part of which is a farming country and a part of which is thoroughly planting; in Tennessee, part cotton, and the eastern part a mountainous farming country; in Texas and North Carolina, where similar facts exist; and perhaps in some other States. What I desire is that you get the idea I have of the matter; that while it is true that all the slave States have certain ties and sympathies between them which are real, and ought not to be broken; yet, on the other hand, it is extremely easy to carry this idea to a fatal and a false extent, and to ruin ourselves forever under the illusion begotten thereby. In Kentucky, the institution of slavery exists about in the proportion of one slave to four white people, and the gap between the two races is widening at every census. In South Carolina there are about five slaves to three white persons, and the increment is on the slave side. In the Cotton States, I know of no way in which the institution of slavery can be dealt with at all, except by keeping the relation as it stands, as an integral portion of the body politic, unmanageable except in the present relation of the negro to the white man: and, in this posture, it is the duty of the nation to protect and defend the Cotton States. In regard to Kentucky, the institution of slavery is in such a position that the people can do with it whatever they may see fit, both now, and at any future period, without being obliged, by reason of it, to resort to any desperate expedient, in any direction.

The state of things I have sketched necessarily produces a general resemblance, indeed, because slavery is general—but, at the same time innumerable diversities, responsive to the very condition of slavery, of its prospects, and of its influence in the body politic, in the different slave States. And you never committed a greater folly than you will commit if, disregarding these things, you allow this single consideration—that you are a slave State—to swallow up every other con

sideration, and control your whole action in this great crisis. We in Kentucky are tolerant of opinion. Inform yourselves of what is passing, of an opposite character, throughout South Carolina: and reflect on the change that must pass on you, before you would be prepared to tear down the most venerable institutions, to insult the proudest emblems of your country's glory, and to treat constitutions and laws as if they were play-things for children; before you are prepared to descend from your present noble posture, and surrender yourself to the guidance and dictation of such counsels and such statesmen as rule this disunion movement. Nothing seems to me more obvious, and nothing is more important to be pressed on your attention at this moment, than that the non-cotton States stand in a position radically different in all respects from the position in which the Cotton States stand, both with regard to the institution of slavery, and with regard to the balance of the nation. The result is that all these States, the Cotton States, and the mixed States, and the non-cotton slave States, and the free States, may enjoy peace and may enjoy prosperity under a common government, and in a common Union, as they have done from the beginning; where the rights of all, and the interests of all may be respected and protected, and yet where the interests of every portion must be regulated by some general consideration of the interests which are common to every body. On the other hand, in a confederacy where cotton is the great idea and end, it is utterly impossible for the mixed, much more for the non-cotton States, to protect adequately any of their rights, except the right of slavery, to carry out any of their purposes except purposes connected with slavery, to inaugurate any system of policy or even to be free, otherwise than as they servilely follow the lead, and bow to the rule of the Cotton States. The very instant you enter a confederacy in which all is regulated and created by the supreme interest of cotton, every thing precious and distinctive of you, is jeopardized! Do you want the slave trade re-opened? Do you want free trade and direct taxation?

Do you want some millions more of African cannibals thrown amongst you broadcast throughout the whole slave States? Do you want to begin a war which shall end when you have taken possession of the whole Southern part of this continent down to the isthmus of Darien? If your design is to accept the principles, purposes and policy, which are openly avowed in the interest of secession, and which you see exhibited on a small scale, but in their essence, in South Carolina; if that is your notion of regulated freedom and the perfect security of life and property; if that is your understanding of high national prosperity, where the great idea is more negroes, more cotton, direct taxes, free imports from all nations, and the conquest of all outlying land that will bring cotton; then, undoubtedly, Kentucky is no longer what she has been, and her new career, beginning with secession, leads her far away from her strength and her renown.

The second suggestion I have to make to you is, that if the slave line is made the line of division, all the slave States seceding from the Union, and all the free States standing unitedly by the Union; what I assert in that case is, that the possibility of the perpetuity of negro slavery in any border State terminates at once. In our affected zeal for slavery, we will have taken the most effectual means of extinguishing it; and that in the most disastrous of all possible ways. On the contrary, if this Union is to be saved, it is by the cordial sympathy of the border States on one side and on the other side of the slave line that it must be saved. We have nothing to hope from the extreme States on either side; nothing from the passionate violence of the extreme South—nothing from the turbulent fanaticism of the extreme North. It is along that slave line—and in the spirit of mutual confidence, and the sense of a common interest of the people on the north and on the south of that line, that the nation must seek the instruments of its safety. It is Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, on the one side; and Maryland, Delaware, Virginia, Kentucky, Missouri—God send that I might

add with confidence Tennessee and North Carolina—on the other side; these are the States that are competent to save this Union. Nothing, therefore, can be more suicidal, than for the border slave States to adopt any line of conduct which can justly deprive them of the sympathy and confidence of the border free States—now largely possessed by them. And nothing is more certain than that a patriotic devotion to the Union, and a willingness to do all that honorable men should do, or moderate men ask, in order to preserve it—is as strongly prevalent at this moment, among the people of the border free States, as amongst those of the border slave States. The great central States I have enumerated—must necessarily control the fate both of the nation and of the continent—whenever they act in concert; and the fate, both of the nation and the continent, is utterly inscrutable after the division of them on the slave line—except that we know that when Samson is shorn of his strength, the enemies of Israel and of God will make the land desolate. Fronting on the Atlantic Ocean through many degrees of latitude, running back across the continent so as to include an area larger than all Western Europe, and finer than any of equal extent upon the globe, embracing a population inferior to none on earth, and sufficiently numerous at present to constitute a great nation; it is this immense power, free, to a great extent, from the opposite and intractable fanaticisms of the extreme States on both sides of it, that is charged with the preservation of our national institutions, and with them our national power and glory. There are two aspects of the case thus put—in either of which success by peaceful means, is impossible: first, if these great central States fail to apprehend this part of the great mission committed to them; secondly, if the Cotton States, following the example of South Carolina—or the Northern States adhering to extreme purposes in the opposite direction—by either means render all peaceful adjustment impossible.

But even in that case, the mission of these great States is

not ended. If under the curse of God, and the madness of the extreme Northern and Southern States, the preservation of the Union should be impossible; then it belongs to this immense central power, to re-construct the nation, upon the slave line as its central idea; and thus perpetuate our institutions, our principles, and our hopes, with an unchanged nationality. For even they who act in the mere interests of slavery, ought to see, that after the secession of the Cotton States, the border slave States are obliged, even for the sake of slavery, to be destroyed, or to adhere to the Union as long as any Union exists; and that if the Union were utterly destroyed, its re-construction upon the slave line, is the solitary condition on which slavery can exist in security anywhere, or can exist at all in any border State.

I have considered three possible solutions of the existing state of things: The preservation of the Union as it is; the probable secession of the cotton slave States, and the effect thereof upon the Union, and upon the course Kentucky ought to take; the total destruction of the Union, and its re-construction upon the slave line. I have considered the whole matter, from the point of view understood to be taken by the President of the United States; namely: that he judges there is no power in the General Government to prevent, by force, its own dissolution by means of the secession of the States; and I have done this, because however ruinous or absurd any one may suppose the views of the President to be, it is nevertheless under their sway that the first acts of our impending revolutions are progressing. Under the same helpless aspect of the General Government, there remain two more possible solutions of the posture and duty of Kentucky, and other States similarly situated. The first of these is, that in the progress of events, it may well become the border slave States to unite themselves into a separate confederacy; the second is, that it may well become Kentucky, under various contingencies, to assume a separate sovereign position, and act by herself. Having clearly stated my own conclusions, I will

only say that the first of these two results is not one to be sought as desirable in itself, but only as an alternative to be preferred to more dangerous arrangements. For my unalterable conviction is, that the slave line is the only permanent and secure basis of a confederacy for the slave States, and especially for the border slave States, and that the union of free and slave States, in the same confederacy, is the indispensable condition of the peaceful and secure existence of slavery. As to the possible isolation of Kentucky, this also, it seems to me, is not a result to be sought. If it should occur as the alternative to evils still greater, Kentucky ought to embrace it with calmness and dignity, and, awaiting the progress of events, show by her wisdom, her courage, her moderation, her invincible rectitude, both to this age and to all that are to come, how fully she understood in the midst of a gain-saying and backsliding generation, that no people ever performed anything glorious who did not trust God, who did not love their country, and who were not faithful to their oaths.

It seems to me, therefore, that the immediate duty of Kentucky may be clearly stated in very few words.

First. To stand by the Constitution and the Union of the country, to the last extremity.

Second. To prevent, as for the moment the impending and immediate danger, all attempts to seduce her, all attempts to terrify her, into the taking of any step inconsistent with her own constitution and laws—any step disregarding of the constitution and laws of the United States, any step which can possibly compromise her position, or draw her on otherwise than by her own free choice deliberately expressed at the polls, according to her existing laws and constitution, whereby she will choose her own destiny.

Third. To settle in her heart that the rending of this Union on the slave line is, for her, whatever it may be for others, the most fatal issue that the times can have; and the doing this in such a way as to subject her to the dominion of

the Cotton States for all time to come, is the very worst form of that most fatal issue.

After all, my friends, after all,—we have the great promise of God that all things shall work together for good to them that love him. I do not know but that it may be the mind of God and his divine purpose to break this Union up, and to make of it other nations, that shall at last be more powerful than it, unitedly, would have been. I do not know, I do not pretend to say, how the Lord will use the passions of men to glorify his name. He restrains the remainder of wrath and will cause the wrath of man to praise him. We have his divine assurance that all nations that have gone before us, and all that will follow us, and we ourselves, by our rise, by our progress, and alas! by our decay and ruin, are but instruments of his infinite purpose, and means in his adorable providence, whereby the everlasting reign of Messiah, the Christ of God, is to be made absolute and universal.

Great then, is our consolation, as we tremble for our country, to be confident in our Lord! Great is our comfort, as we bewail the miseries which have befallen our glorious inheritance, to know that the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth! Infinitely precious is the assurance, amidst the trials now impending, and the woes which threaten us, that the heroic self-devotion with which our personal duty is discharged, is one part of our fitness to become partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light!

1. OUR COUNTRY—ITS PERIL—ITS DELIVERANCE: Art. IV. of the Danville Quarterly Review for March, 1861.
 2. STATE OF THE COUNTRY: Art. V. of the Danville Quarterly Review for June, 1861.
 3. DISCOURSE, delivered on the day of National Humiliation, Jan. 4, 1861, at Lexington, Ky.
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THREE ARTICLES

ON THE

STATE OF THE COUNTRY,

BY THE

REV. ROBERT J. BRECKINRIDGE, D.D., L.L.D.,
" "
PROFESSOR IN DANVILLE THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY.

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will contain Articles on the “New Gospel of Rationalism,” the “Doctrine of Imputation,” and probably one by Dr. Breckinridge reviewing the proceedings of the last Presbyterian General Assembly at Philadelphia. Of the Article on the *Doctrine of Imputation*, a distinguished Presbyterian minister, who read it, thus writes to the Publisher:

“This first part (of three) is very able—and as soon as its nature and design are known by our ministry, will be sought with avidity; and will require some of the ablest and most widely influential of our American Theologians either to modify their statements, or defend them better than they have hitherto done. The Articles will, I think, make a powerful impression, and do our Church an incalculable service.”



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